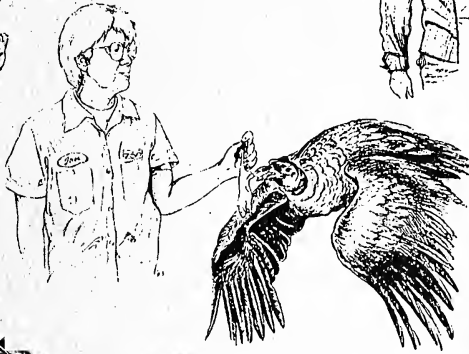


# ANIMAL KEEPERS' FORUM

JULY 2007

National  
Zookeeper Week  
July 15-21, 2007



*Yonetani*



The Journal of the American  
Association of Zoo Keepers, Inc.

**ANIMAL KEEPERS' FORUM**, 3601 S.W. 29th St., Suite 133, Topeka, KS 66614-2054  
Phone: (785) 273-9149 FAX (785) 273-1980

**July 2007**  
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also serves as AAZK Liaison to the American Zoo & Aquarium Association (AZA)  
**AAZK Administrative Secretary:** Barbara Manspeaker, AAZK, Inc., Topeka, KS

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AAZK Administrative Offices/Topeka

#### **AAZK PUBLICATIONS - CONTINUING DATA COLLECTION**

Resources for Crisis Management in Zoos & Other Animal Care Facilities, Vol. 2 - Susan D. Chan, Topeka, KS;  
William K. Baker, Little Rock Zoo, AR; Diana Guerrero, ArkAnimals, Big Bear Lake, CA

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33rd Anniversary  
1974 - 2007

## *About the Cover.....*

*This month's cover features a compilation of some of the artwork of a long-time AAZK International member and amazingly talented artist, Yoshi Yonetani. Yoshi works for the Zoo Design & Education Lab (ZooDEL) in Kobe, Japan and has attended a number of AAZK conferences and traveled to many zoos across the U.S. These drawings of keepers with their animals appeared on the covers of *Animal Keepers' Forum* between 1988 and 1995. The zookeeping profession has evolved dramatically over the 40 years of AAZK's existence. No longer are zoo keepers simply "clean and feed" laborers, but rather highly trained professionals whose work includes training and operant conditioning, providing environmental enrichment to their animals, assisting in behavioral and reproductive research, and serving as front-line educators to the visiting public. Their passion for animals, both in the captive state and in the wild, makes them also ardent conservationists. It is with great pleasure that we honor all those men and women who devote their lives to making a positive difference in the lives of the captive animals in their care. We especially salute you all during the first-ever National Zookeeper Week, July 15-21, 2007. Thank you for all you do for captive animals, and thanks to Yoshi for his great artwork depicting keepers and the animals with which they work! Let's all celebrate the profession!*

### **Call for Cover Art**

We are currently seeking cover art for use on *Animal Keepers' Forum*. Artists are encouraged to submit their artwork for consideration. Cover subjects include all species of animals and also art of keepers working with their animals. Clean, crisp artwork, such as that done in pen and ink, reproduces best in *AKF*, but other mediums, such as pencil, may also be considered. Submission of artwork does not guarantee that it will be selected for an *AKF* cover. Artists should send a brief natural history piece to accompany their artwork. If the animal subject is an animal from their zoo, artists are encouraged to include info about that particular animal such as house name, breeding history, etc. Artists should include their name, title and facility as well as their preferred mailing address. Artwork may be submitted in hardcopy to Susan Chan at the address on the cover of this publication. Or artwork may be sent as jpg or tif file attachments to the editor's email: [akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com](mailto:akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com)< If the artist wishes hardcopy artwork returned, they should include a self-addressed, appropriately-sized envelope when submitting.

Articles sent to *Animal Keepers' Forum* will be reviewed by the editorial staff for publication. Articles of a research or technical nature will be submitted to one or more of the zoo professionals who serve as referees for *AKE*. No commitment is made to the author, but an effort will be made to publish articles as soon as possible. Lengthy articles may be separated into monthly installments at the discretion of the editor. The editor reserves the right to edit material without consultation unless approval is requested in writing by the author. Materials submitted will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed, appropriately-sized envelope. Telephone, fax or email contributions of late-breaking news or last-minute insertions are accepted as space allows. Phone 785-273-9149; FAX (785) 273-1980; email is [akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com](mailto:akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com)<

**Deadline for each regular issue is the 10th of the preceding month.  
Dedicated issues may have separate deadline dates and will be noted by the editor.**

Articles printed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the *AKF* staff or the American Association of Zoo Keepers, Inc. Publication does not indicate endorsement by the Association.

Items in this publication may be reprinted providing credit to this publication is given and a copy of the reprinted material is forwarded to the editor. If an article is shown to be separately copyrighted by the author(s), then permission must be sought from the author(s). Reprints of material appearing in this journal may be ordered from the editor. Back issues are available for \$4.00 each. Special issues may cost more.

E-Mail Addresses: You may reach Barbara Manspeaker at AAZK Administrative Offices at: [aazkoffice@zk.kscoxmail.com](mailto:aazkoffice@zk.kscoxmail.com)< You may reach Susan Chan and *Animal Keepers' Forum* at: [akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com](mailto:akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com)<

**AAZK website Address: [www.aazk.org](http://www.aazk.org)  
BFR Website: <http://aazkbfr.org>**

# Scoops & Scuttlebutt



## National Zookeeper Week

We are thrilled to have had the week of July 15-21, 2007 designated as National Zookeeper Week, recognizing the important role zookeepers play not only in the professional husbandry of exotic animals in zoos and aquariums across the country, but also for their roles as public educators on issues of conservation and the plight of endangered species. AAZK is proud to support this unique celebration of the profession of zookeeping and encourages all members and especially AAZK Chapters to take advantage of this opportunity to hold special events at their facilities.



We would like to thank graphic artist Ellen Goodwin of San Diego for designing the official logo for National Zookeeper Week. Thanks also go out to newly-appointed AAZK Board member Bob Cisneros for coordinating

efforts for the proclamation by Congress and providing AAZK Chapters with a list of ideas for celebrating this special week. AAZK also appreciates the efforts of Congresswomen Susan Davis (D-CA 53rd) and Nancy Boyda (D-KS 2nd) for co-sponsoring this resolution. The resolution was published in the June issue of *AKF* and may be viewed on the AAZK website Home Page ([www.aazk.org](http://www.aazk.org))

## From the AKF Editor

We are excited to announce that the August issue of *Animal Keepers' Forum* will be a special one dedicated to the polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*). We are working cooperatively with Polar Bears International to put together an issue launching 2008 as The Year of the Polar Bear. This issue will contain articles on polar bear biology, husbandry, nutrition, training, research, status in the wild, and how you can help spread the word on the problems facing the polar bear as this species tries to maintain its populations amidst vanishing ice flows and critical climate changes. We hope this issue will provide the AAZK membership with lots of information they will be able to utilize throughout 2008 in formal public information programs and informal encounters with zoo visitors to raise awareness of the polar bear's plight.

## AAZK Video Night Seeks Participants

The AAZK Enrichment and Training Committees invite you to submit your enrichment and/or training videos to be presented at Video Night during the 2007 AAZK National Conference in Galveston. Submissions should be in the following format:

- In VHS or CD format
- No more than 7 minutes long.
- Good quality (steady frame, appropriate or no sound, clear picture)
- Videos may be edited for content and to accommodate time restraints.

We would like to see enrichment that encourages species-specific behaviors and innovations in training that help facilitate husbandry and specific conditions. All submissions will be put onto one comprehensive CD. A complementary CD will be given to each facility that contributes a video. Please plan on having a representative present during video night to narrate your facility's submission. Submissions are due by **August 1, 2007** and should be sent to: Danielle Decker, 1200 N. Savannah Circle E., Bay Lake, FL 32830.

You will be notified prior to the conference if your video is selected to be viewed at video night. Please contact Rachel Daneault [rachel.b.daneault@disney.com](mailto:rachel.b.daneault@disney.com) or Nikki Bowens [rhinogirl1@yahoo.com](mailto:rhinogirl1@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

### **Dallas Zoo Offers Opportunity for Field Research**

Learn field research techniques and contribute to wildlife conservation during the Dallas Zoo's Wildlife Research Expedition to Mexico November 11-24, 2007. Expedition volunteers will be participating in a study of ocelot behavioral ecology, as well as capturing and banding hawks. For more information, go to [http://www.dallaszoo.org/conservation/cs5\\_wildlife.htm](http://www.dallaszoo.org/conservation/cs5_wildlife.htm)

### **Grevy Zebra Foal Artwork Benefits Conservation Program**

In a unique collaboration between art and conservation, Tucson artist Diana Madaras has recently painted a portrait of 5-day-old Adia (Swahili for "gift), the newest Grevy's Zebra foal born at the Reid Park Zoo in Tucson, AZ. Fifty percent of the proceeds from the sale of all prints of "Baby Steps" and "Baby Zebra" will be donated to the Saint Louis Zoo's WildCare Institute Horn of Africa Conservation Center to benefit the *Grevy's Zebra Trust*. To purchase these prints, please call 520-623-4000 or visit [www.madaras.com](http://www.madaras.com)<

### **CNAH Announces Completion of North American Frog & Toad Image Files**

The Center for North American Herpetology is pleased to announce that the process of assembling all electronic color images for its authoritative checklist to the frogs and toads of Canada and the United States is now complete. They can be viewed at: <http://www.cnah.org/nameslist.asp?id=3>

The CNAH checklist recognizes 96 species of frogs and toads in North America (north of Mexico). The 140 color images in the CNAH collection displays all North American species and pattern-classes (races) that are still recognized, most by Suzanne L. Collins of the CNAH Board of Directors, but exquisitely augmented by the photographic works of Richard D. Bartlett, Stephen Corn, Kevin de Queiroz, William Flaxington, Daniel D. Fogell, Paul Freed, Paul S. Hamilton, Robert W. Hansen, Twan Leenders, Robert E. Lovich, Daniel Parker, Thomas (Randy) Simpson, John Stoklosa, Travis W. Taggart, Ginny Weatherman, and Douglas C. Woodhams.

CNAH encourage the academic herpetological community to avail themselves of this online resource and we hope that it proves useful to them in their research and teaching. The CNAH web site is the most frequently accessed academic herpetological resource on the Internet worldwide, a signal position it has held for the last decade.

The CNAH assemblage of color images of all North American (north of Mexico) amphibians is now complete, and includes 399 images of 280 species and their pattern/classes.

### **Notice on Reactions Column**

The Reactions Column - a question and answer forum for the zoo professional on crisis management - will not appear in the July or August issues of *AKF*. It will return in September and October with a two-part series on "Improving Communication and Reducing Conflict in a Zoo Environment". Column Editor William K. Baker, Jr. will discuss the impact poor communication and conflict in staff relations can have on response to crisis situations and crisis management readiness.

### **Zoo Postcards Sought by Slovakian Teen**

We received an email at Administrative Office recently from a 16-year-old young woman from Slovakia who collects postcards from zoos and of zoo animals. She currently has over 1900 postcards in her collection. If you would like to help her add to her collection, you can send a postcard to her at:

Iveta VIDOVA  
Bitunkova 2  
93201 Velky Meder  
Slovakia

# Coming Events

**The Chimpanzee Care and Management Workshop** 17-19 July 2007. Hosted by the Knoxville Zoo, Knoxville, TN and presented by the Chimpanzee SSP®. A comprehensive three-day course covering all aspects of progressive chimpanzee husbandry. Topics include: managing complex social groups, social introductions, operant conditioning training, contraception strategies, and enrichment programs. For registration or other information contact Steve Ross, Lincoln Park Zoo at (312) 742-7263 or [ross@lpzoo.org](mailto:ross@lpzoo.org)

**The Animal Behavior Society's 44th Annual Meeting** - 21-25 July 2007 in Burlington, VT. For further information see [www.animalbehavior.org/ABS/Program](http://www.animalbehavior.org/ABS/Program) or contact the designated host Ken Yasukawa ([yasukawa@beloit.edu](mailto:yasukawa@beloit.edu)).

**MIE: Macropod Information Exchange** - 27-29 July 2007. To be held in Kansas City, MO. For more information visit: <http://www.macropodinfo.com> or contact Jacque Blessington at: [Jacsprat65@aol.com](mailto:Jacsprat65@aol.com)

**International Conference on Environmental Enrichment** - 5-10 August 2007. Hosted by Schöenbrunn Zoo, Vienna, Austria. Theme is "Enrichment - key for successful animal management". further info available at the conference website [www.zoovienna.at/icee2007](http://www.zoovienna.at/icee2007)

**BIERZS The Symposium 2007: Bear Information Exchange for Rehabilitators, Zoos and Sanctuaries**- 24-26 August 2007. The Symposium will be hosted by Western University of Health Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine (<http://www.westernu.edu/xp/edu/veterinary/home.xml>) in Pomona, CA. The conference will be held on Friday to Sunday, inclusive at Western University of Health Sciences, the Los Angeles Zoo (<http://www.lazoo.org/condorall/>), and a local sanctuary. Any additional questions can be directed to: Dr. Jordan Schaul, BIERZS 2007 Co-Chair Planning Group - [jcschaul@aim.com](mailto:jcschaul@aim.com) OR Else M.B. Poulsen, BIERZS 2007 Co-Chair Planning Group, [embpoulsen@hotmail.com](mailto:embpoulsen@hotmail.com)

**27th Annual Association of Zoo Veterinary Technicians Conference** - 7-11 September 2007 in Honolulu, HI at the Honolulu Zoo. If you would like more information please visit [www.azvt.org](http://www.azvt.org) or contact Lynne Nakamitsu at [lnakamitsu@honolulu.gov](mailto:lnakamitsu@honolulu.gov)

**IV International Symposium on Breeding Birds in Captivity** - 12-16 September 2007 at Doubletree International Plaza, Toronto, Ont., Canada. For more information please visit <http://www.isbbc.org/>

**AZAD National Conference** - 25 - 30 September 2007 in St. Louis, MO. Hosted by the Saint Louis Zoo Docents. Conference capacity is 700 people. For more information contact Louise Rovak, [lrovak@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lrovak@sbcglobal.net) or see <http://www.stlzoo.org/education/zoodocents/2007azadconference/>

**AAZK National Conference** - 30 September - 4 October, 2007 - at Moody Gardens in Galveston, TX. Hosted by the Galveston AAZK Chapter. For more info

see the yellow insert in this issue of *AKF* or visit the Chapter's website at [www.gcaazk.org/](http://www.gcaazk.org/)

**28th Annual Elephant Managers Association Conference** - 14-16 October 2007 - hosted by the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, Cincinnati, Ohio. An optional pre-conference trip on October 13th to the Indianapolis Zoo is also available, as well as a post-conference trip on October 17th to the Louisville Zoo. The conference Icebreaker will be held the evening of October 13th. For more information visit <http://www.elephant-managers.com/> or call the elephant department at the Cincinnati Zoo at (513)281-4700 ex.8360.

**Call for Papers** - Abstracts should be brief and include a description of the methods, results and conclusions of the presentation, where appropriate. This year, the first five presenters to have their abstracts approved will also have their conference registration fees waived. In order to have their registration waived, the presenter must be a member of EMA. Only one registration fee waiver will be granted per presentation. Once the five registration fee waivers have been granted, submitters will be notified that registration fee waivers are no longer available when their abstracts are received. Please send electronic copies of abstracts to [richard.heithaus@cincinnati.zoo.org](mailto:richard.heithaus@cincinnati.zoo.org)

**Orangutan SSP® Husbandry Workshop** - 16-18 October 2007 - Hosted by the Brookfield Zoo in Chicago, IL. This husbandry workshop will focus on the care and management of the orangutan in a zoological setting. Topics will include environmental enrichment, positive reinforcement training, nutrition, medical management, introductions, birth management, public education, conservation and general orangutan management. Workshop registration fee (\$85) covers most meals including a mixer and a banquet. Additional information including a registration form, travel information and an abstract submission form is available by contacting Carol Sodaro, Orangutan SSP Husbandry Advisor at [casodaro@brookfieldzoo.org](mailto:casodaro@brookfieldzoo.org)

**The 4th Crissey Zoological Symposium** - 7-8 December 2007. Held at The North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine. This symposium is for professional nutritionists, researchers and veterinarians working with zoo animals; interested students. First day focus will be on reptile and amphibian nutrition; second day will encompass nutrition talks from all comparative nutrition areas. For symposium details see [www.cvm.ncsu.edu/conted/zoonutrition/](http://www.cvm.ncsu.edu/conted/zoonutrition/)

**2008 Gorilla Workshop** - 23-27 January 2008 - Hosted by Disney's Animal Kingdom and the Brevard Zoo in Orlando, FL. For more information see [2008GorillaWorkshop.com](http://2008GorillaWorkshop.com), or call Beth Armstrong at (614) 506-7368 or Rachel Daneault at (407) 938-2337.

**Post Your Coming Events Here**  
email to: [akfeditor@zk.scoxmail.com](mailto:akfeditor@zk.scoxmail.com)



# From the Executive Director

## *From a Caring Membership*

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, I would like to recognize the Chapters that supported their Association during the period of September 2006 through the re-charter period of 2007. Each Chapter committed monetary resources and personal time to help support their Association. To date, the total funds committed to the Association from our Chapter membership amounts to \$54,355.55. These funds were gathered from re-charter fees and the duty obligation that was instituted in January of 2007.

Revenue from the Chapter re-charter process *increased* by \$22,139 over 2006, with additional funds remaining to be deposited from dedicated Chapter fundraising efforts in the next couple of months. You are all to be congratulated for your efforts and dedication that enable this Association to move forward with our goals and objectives. When you combine the re-charter income with the very successful Institutional Membership drive, we have increased our sustainable income for the Association by over \$33,000 in a one-year time period. It's all because the membership cares.

Thank you!

### **Platinum** (\$2000 and up)

Audubon Park Chapter  
Dallas Chapter  
Greater Cleveland Chapter  
Indianapolis Chapter  
Milwaukee County Chapter  
Southern Ontario Chapter

### **Gold** (\$1000-\$2000)

Akron Chapter  
Cape May County Chapter  
Oklahoma City Chapter  
Phoenix Chapter  
Point Defiance Chapter  
Puget Sound Chapter  
St. Louis Chapter  
San Diego Chapter



**Silver**  
(\$500-\$1000)

Chesapeake Chapter  
Detroit Chapter  
Georgia Chapter  
Knoxville Chapter  
Nashville Chapter  
Rocky Mountain Chapter  
Tulsa Chapter

Columbus Chapter  
Forth Worth Chapter  
Greater Houston Chapter  
Little Rock Chapter  
Northern Lights Chapter  
San Francisco Chapter  
Utah Chapter

**Bronze**  
(up to \$500)

Cheyenne Mountain Chapter  
Beardsley Chapter  
Buffalo Chapter  
Edmonton Chapter  
El Paso Del Norte Chapter  
Greater Kansas City Chapter  
Lion Country Safari Chapter  
National Capital Chapter  
Orange County Chapter  
Portland Chapter  
Rosamond Gifford Chapter  
Seneca Park Chapter  
Tampa Bay Chapter  
Wildlife World Chapter

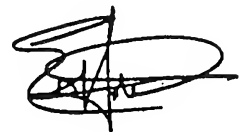
New Bedford Chapter  
Birmingham Chapter  
California Desert Chapter  
EFBC Chapter  
Greater Cincinnati Chapter  
Lincoln Park Chapter\*  
Minnesota Chapter  
New England Chapter  
Palm Beach Chapter  
Roger Williams Chapter  
San Antonio Chapter  
Sedgwick County Chapter  
Topeka Chapter  
West Michigan Chapter

Baton Rouge Chapter  
Brookfield Chapter  
Central Illinois Chapter  
Galveston Chapter  
Honolulu Chapter  
Ozarks Chapter  
Omaha Chapter  
Pittsburgh Chapter  
Sacramento Chapter  
Santa Barbara Chapter  
Snake River Chapter  
Tucson Chapter  
Riverside Chapter

\*The Lincoln Park AAZK Chapter is also funding the production of the 2006 Conference Proceedings from the 2006 AAZK National Conference.

The following listed Chapters have pledged to hold a fundraiser in 2007, where the profits are dedicated to AAZK, Inc. Funds have not been reported as of publication.

Greater Baltimore Chapter  
Greater Orlando Chapter  
Jackson Chapter  
Jacksonville Chapter  
Louisville Chapter  
Memphis Chapter  
Philadelphia Chapter  
South Florida Chapter  
Toledo Chapter  
West Texas Chapter  
North Carolina Chapter



-----Ed Hansen, AAZK Executive Director

# Bylaws Announcement to the Membership

The AAZK membership will be presented the following proposed revisions to the Bylaws of the Association for ratification during the Annual Meeting to be held 4 October, 2007 during the National Conference in Galveston, TX. Proposed changes to the existing Bylaws were solicited from the membership and Board of Directors and were coordinated by the AAZK Bylaws Committee chaired by Gisela Wiggins of the North Carolina Zoo. New language/additions are shown below in *italics*. Language and/or sections to be deleted are shown in ~~strike thru~~. This announcement fulfills the Bylaw requirements of 45-day notification of proposed Bylaw revisions to the AAZK membership. Anyone wishing an electronic copy of the full Bylaws should email their request to akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com< Please put "Bylaws Request" in the subject line.

## Article 2 Officers and Board of Directors

### Section 1. Board of Directors.

The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Board of Directors, *nominated from the Professional Membership, and* elected by the Professional Membership of the Association. The number of Directors shall be set according to a policy detailed in the Operations Manual of the Association. The officers shall be the President and Vice-President. The Immediate Past President whose term as an elected Board Member has expired may serve as an ex-officio member of the Board without the right to vote and shall serve as an advisor to the Board of Directors. The President of the Association shall be elected by Executive Committee appointed by the Board of Directors in a policy detailed in the Operations Manual of the Association.

## Article 3 Meetings

### Section 3. Electronic Meetings.

*The Board of Directors reserves the right to conduct business through electronic meetings. Electronic Meetings shall be held approximately once per month. All matters of updates, comments, business operations, ratification of proposals shall be included on the meeting agenda. All votes are subject to a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Written notification of agenda is hereby published and dispensed. Minutes of the electronic meetings are available by written request of a member in good standing with the Association*

## Article IV Membership

**Affiliate:** Zoo and aquarium personnel employed, ~~and~~ *salaried, or in a volunteer position by* at a recognized zoo, aquarium or animal care facility, in a position not described in the Professional category. *This includes managerial, curatorial, veterinary, non-keeper positions. Also includes; docents, provisional non-student interns, and volunteers and students.* Affiliate members may vote and hold office on a local level *at the discretion of the Chapter Constitution and Bylaws* and appointed office on a national level.

**Associate:** ~~Any interested individual not connected directly or indirectly with a recognized zoo, aquarium, or animal care facility. Associate members shall not be entitled to vote or hold elective or appointed office.~~

**Student:** *A person interested in the animal care profession who is currently registered as a student in the college, high school or middle school level. Proof of current student identification (copy) is required when submitting the application for membership in the Association. Student members shall not be entitled to vote or hold elective or appointed office on any level within the Association, unless a Chapter is formed and duly chartered at the local level, consisting primarily of Student members. An AAZK Student Chapter may only be formed at the College level.*

**International:** Any person living outside North America and who falls into the categories of Professional, Affiliate or ~~Associate~~ Student. This category of membership shall not be entitled to vote or hold elective or appointed office.

**Institution:** Open to any zoological institution, aquarium, or related animal care facility. The Board of Directors sets the Institutional Membership fee. Application for membership in this category is subject to approval from the Board of Directors. Criteria for membership in this category are available from the Administrative Offices of the Association. *A Class C USDA Exhibitor License is required.* This category retains no voting rights.

**Commercial;** Open to commercial vendors supplying animal care, animal foods or animal related products or educational materials to zoological institutions or AAZK membership. The Board of Directors sets membership fees in this category. ~~This category retains no voting rights but is entitled to a tax receipt for charitable donation.~~ *Members in the Commercial Category shall be entitled to advertise in AAZK publications at a discounted rate set by the Board of Directors.*

*Conservation Partner: Open to groups that are incorporated in the name of conservation education or continuing education for animal keepers. An AAZK Conservation Partner shall promote education through recognized media and shall convene workshops or produce material for the purpose of educating their membership. A Conservation Partner would exchange membership benefits with AAZK and exchange a Link on the website of the Association, excluding access to protected areas of the AAZK website. A Conservation Partner that wishes to sell a product or service to the membership of this Association may purchase advertisement in the Animal Keepers' Forum at the discounted member rate. The Board of Directors controls and sets membership fees in this category.*

### **Standing Committees**

The Board of Directors shall cause to stand permanently, the following Committees or appointments:

#### **Bylaws**

There shall be a Bylaws Committee consisting of a minimum of five (5) Professional members, two (2) of which shall be members of the Board of Directors. Appointments are made at the discretion of the President. This committee shall annually review the Bylaws of the Association and shall recommend changes, if any, to the Board of Directors.

#### **Nominations and Elections**

~~The Board shall have the option of appointing re shall be~~ a Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) consisting of at least three (3) Professional Members, or appointing staff to coordinate the Board of Director's election, with direct oversight of the Executive Director of the Association. Committee appointments are at the discretion of the President.

In an election year ~~the is~~ Committee or staff, through the Administrative Offices of the Association, shall distribute to each Professional member by mail or by posting on the Web site of the Association, a biographical sketch, platform statement and official ballot as delineated in the Nomination and Elections Manual. Votes shall be cast by the Professional membership of the Association, in a manner delineated by the Board of Directors. Absentee Ballots for Board of Director elections can be obtained from the NEC Committee or from the Administrative Offices by written request to the address of the Association.

NEC Committee members are required to resign from the NEC Committee in order to be nominated for election to the Board of Directors. ~~The is NEC Committee, or staff~~ shall also follow the provisions for recall elections delineated in the NEC Manual. Guidelines for this procedure are referenced in the NEC Manual.

#### **Conferences**

The Board of Directors shall distribute a call for Annual Conference Bids at least three (3) years prior to the date of the proposed Conference. The bid process and requirements are detailed in the Operations Manual of this Association. Chapters that have bid successfully by ratification of membership vote ~~at the Annual Conference~~ are required by the Board of Directors to sign and file the Agreement Statement regarding AAZK Conference: Chapter Responsibilities with the Administrative Office of the Association and are empowered by the Board of Directors to enter into any contractual agreement deemed necessary to host a professional conference. Registration fees are set by the Board of Directors, with input from the Conference Committee during the Annual Business Meeting two (2) years prior to the next conference. Allocation of Registration fees are referenced in the Operations Manual of the Association.

### **Article VIII Amendments**

#### **Section 3. Association Dissolution.**

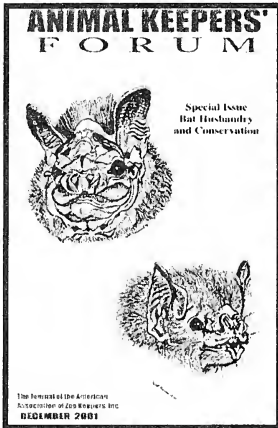
If at any time the Association is dissolved, the total assets belonging to the Association, after legal settlement, shall be transferred directly to the treasury of the *Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Inc. to be utilized in any manner deemed legal and prudent by the managing authority of the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Inc. of Isiolo Kenya.*

## ***Are You Moving?***

**Make sure to notify AAZK National of your change of address. Don't miss a single AKF issue! Call: 785-273-9149 or you can email change of address information to: [aazkoffice@zk.ksoxmail.com](mailto:aazkoffice@zk.ksoxmail.com)**

# DEDICATED ISSUES SALE !

We're cleaning house as we are running out of storage space at the Administrative Office. So we are pleased to offer a special twin-pack of dedicated issues that have been published by AAZK, Inc. If you missed these special issues or are a new AAZK member, now is your opportunity to pick up a wealth of information for a minimal price.



The Special Issue on Bat Husbandry and Conservation was published in December of 2001 and contains 18 papers on various aspects of bat husbandry, enrichment and conservation status in the wild. 70 pgs

The Special issue on Cheetahs was published in July/August 2005 and contains 31 articles dealing with a broad range of topics from captive husbandry to hand-rearing to breeding to conservation in the wild and field research. 124 pgs.



Please fill out the order form below to receive this twin-pack of dedicated *AKF's*. Mail the order form, along with check made out to AAZK or credit card information to: Dedicated Issues, AAZK, Inc. 3601 SW 29th St., Suite 133, Topeka, KS 66614-2054. Or you may call (785) 273-9149 to purchase using a Mastercard or Visa.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER**

## **AAZK Announces New Members**

Audra Byram, **York Wild Kingdom (ME)**; Serene Watson, **The Reston Zoo (VA)**; Elizabeth Weeks, no zoo listed, **Roanoke, VA**; Kristi L. Wickline, **Mill Mountain Zoo (VA)**; Sara Monson, **North Carolina Zoo (NC)**; Brittany Brubeck, **Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens (FL)**; Randall Tucker, **Miami Metro Zoo (FL)**; Karrie Hamilton, no zoo listed, **N. Palm Beach, FL**; Erik Scheidegger, **Busch Gardens/Tampa (FL)**; Ken Naugher, **Montgomery Zoo (AL)**; Colette Monique and Lindsay Pick, **Detroit Zoo (MI)**; Wendy Kinkel, **Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo (NE)**; Karri Murphy, **Ft. Worth Zoo (TX)**; Stephanie Carlson, **Pueblo Zoo (CO)**; Steven Ok, **Phoenix Zoo (AZ)**; Virginia Grimley, **Oregon Zoo (OR)**; April West, **Safari West (CA)**; Laura McComesky, **Woodland Park Zoo (WA)**; and Phung Luu, **Vogelpark Avifauna (The Netherlands)**.

### **Renewing Contributing Members**

Trisha McCoy  
Clyde, NC

Steven M. Wing  
Louisville Zoo, Louisville, KY

Amy Roberts, Animal Curator  
Kansas City Zoo, Kansas City, MO

Kevin Koch  
Cathedral City, CA

### **New Contributing Members**

Mary Bieger  
The Kansas City Zoo, Kansas City, MO

### **Renewing Institutional Members**

The Newark Museum  
Newark, NJ

Emperor Aquatics, Inc.  
Pottstown, PA

Catoctin Wildlife Preserve Zoo  
Thurmont, MD

Naples Zoo  
Naples, FL

F.O. Wilson Zoo Library  
Oklahoma City Zoo, OKC, OK

Frank Buck Zoo  
Gainesville, TX

Alaska SeaLife Center  
Seward, AK

### **New Institutional Members**

Greater Vancouver Zoo  
Aldergrove, BC, Canada



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# Chapter News Notes

## Wildlife World Zoo AAZK Chapter

The Wildlife World Zoo, located in Litchfield Park, AZ, has received the call from AAZK National for financial support. We have decided that all proceeds from the Vortex Wishing Well will be donated to the national organization for operating costs in 2007. We are grateful for our national association, and hope that this donation will continue to bring national benefits to our local Chapters.

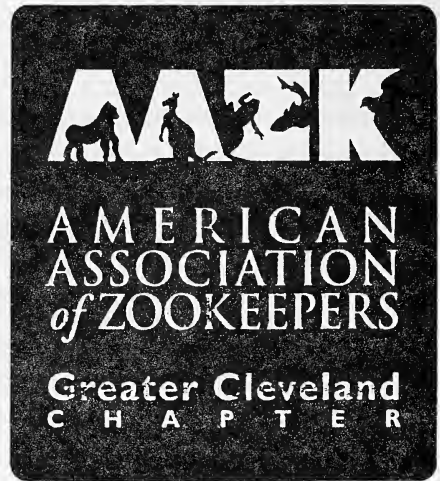
-- submitted by *Monica N. Bunkenburg*  
*WWZ AAZK Secretary*



## Greater Cleveland Chapter AAZK

The Greater Cleveland Chapter has been very busy during the last year and a half. In 2006, we were able to host several fundraising events including two Reverse Raffles, Bowling for Rhinos, an Animal Art Auction and a Wings N' Suds night.

Some of the beneficiaries from these events were Snow Leopard Trust, the Marine Mammal Center, AAZK, Inc., Project Golden Frog, the SLEWTHS Project and the Turtle Survival Alliance. In total, the Chapter sent over \$30,000 to various organizations in 2006.



In addition, we had a speaker, Laura Jordan, come from a local raptor rehabilitation center to talk to Zoo employees and volunteers about her organization. We were able to donate funds to this center along with two other local conservation organizations at the beginning of 2007.

Speaking of 2007, we started off the year with our annual winter Reverse Raffle in February, which benefited Polar Bears International and the Blue Iguana Recovery Program. We hosted Bowling for Rhinos over Memorial Day Weekend and are gearing up for another Animal Art Auction sometime late summer. We look forward to seeing everyone in Texas!

The new officers for 2007 are:

President.....Tiffany Mayo  
Vice-President.....Heather Strawn  
Treasurer.....Julie Izold  
Secretary.....Stefanie Poduska

---submitted by *Tiffany Mayo, President*

What's your Chapter been up to? Let us know about your successful fundraisers, guest speakers, conservation projects, new officers, new logos, etc. Do you have a new logo you want to show the membership? We want to hear from you! Send your Chapter News to the *AKF* Editor at: [akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com](mailto:akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com)



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# AAZK Announces New Positions and Opportunities for Involvement

The Board of Directors is often approached by members who are interested in getting more involved with the Association. The Board has recently created some new positions and is looking to fill other committees. The opportunities listed here are very different, and should offer something for everyone. Now is a great time to offer your talents and service to the Association at the national level.

## What do you get out of participating in AAZK Committees?

- Empowerment. You can take an active role in the development of AAZK projects, and help direct the future of the Association and the animal care profession.
- Professional Development. Working on the national level looks great on a resumé. Show employers, both current and future, you have the ability to take on new tasks, work on diverse teams, and complete assigned projects. The networking opportunities will also have you making professional contacts throughout the profession.
- Ever consider a run for the AAZK Board of Directors? Most Board members started out by getting involved in AAZK committees.
- Satisfaction. Keepers don't always get the opportunity to take on roles of leadership. National committees can provide a great outlet for your untapped creative energy.

## AAZK Marketing Committee Seeks New Members

Ok, Marketing doesn't sound very glamorous! But the Board of Directors considers this committee one of the Association's most important. Besides, there is a lot more to this committee than just marketing. Different areas of focus for this committee include:

- Membership Drives
- Membership Rewards and Retention – Help create fun ways to reward our members
- Membership Benefits – Help add value to an AAZK membership and give us more bang for our membership bucks.
- Collaboration with other associations – Do you have a group that you work with other than AAZK? Do you think there are ways to collaborate so that both associations and their members can benefit? Sign up now.
- Product development – Help us develop new products and market them to our members.
- Sponsorships, advertising, and fundraising – Many of you are already doing an amazing job at the Chapter level. Offer your skills to the Marketing Committee and help the Association secure its financial future.
- Do you have grant writing skills? We can put your talents to work!

If you are interested in helping the Marketing Committee in any of these areas, please send a letter of interest to Shane Good at [shane.good@aazk.org](mailto:shane.good@aazk.org).

## AAZK Conservation Committee Seeks Chairperson and Committee Members

The Board of Directors created the Conservation Committee this year. Since it is a new committee, there are many exciting opportunities and the committee members can take the lead in its development. Some of the things the Board envisions for this committee includes:



- Offer input to the Board of Directors to increase our efforts to manage the Association and conferences in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Keep the membership informed of conservation developments and opportunities for involvement. This could involve *AKF* articles, the committee's own page on the AAZK website, conference workshops, and continuing education classes.
- Assist AAZK members and Chapters in developing their own conservation projects. Provide networking opportunities, feedback on project development, advice on fundraising, etc.
- Do you have your own ideas for this committee? Then apply now and help us advance our conservation initiatives.

**To apply for this position, send a resumé and cover letter to Shane Good at [shane.good@aazk.org](mailto:shane.good@aazk.org) by September 1, 2007. Please specify if you are interested in the chair position, committee member positions, or both.**

### **International Outreach Committee (IOC) Seeks French-Speaking Members**

The IOC is seeking AAZK members who are fluent in French to assist in translating AAZK publications for use in French-speaking countries. If you are willing to assist with this project, please contact Shane Good at [shane.good@aazk.org](mailto:shane.good@aazk.org).

### **International Congress of Zookeepers (ICZ) Seeks Marketing Chairperson**

AAZK, Inc. is one of the founding members of the ICZ. The ICZ currently represents nine national keeper associations and nearly 6000 members representing over 30 countries. The ICZ seeks a Marketing Chairperson to oversee:

- Marketing and Development opportunities
- Sponsorships
- Collaboration with other associations
- Product Development

To apply for this position, please send a resumé and cover letter to Shane Good at [shane.good@aazk.org](mailto:shane.good@aazk.org) by September 1, 2007.



**Didn't find anything that interests you here? Then check out the other AAZK committees on the website ([www.aazk.org](http://www.aazk.org)) or in the *AKF*. Most committees are always looking for new and enthusiastic members. Do you have a skill or idea that doesn't seem to fit any of the committees? Drop me an email and we'll find the right opportunity for you –**  
[shane.good@aazk.org](mailto:shane.good@aazk.org)

# The Animal Training Committee Presents



*Where you can share your training experiences!*

*Training Tales Editors – Jay Pratte, Zoo Atlanta;  
Kim Kezer, Zoo New England; and Angela Binney, Disney's Animal Kingdom*

## Utilizing Target Training to Perform a Tusk Procedure On an Unrestrained Asian Bull Elephant

*By Tarah Bedrossian, Elephant Manager/Enrichment & Training Coordinator  
Miami Metro Zoo, Miami, FL*

### Training Goal

To use positive reinforcement training to target train and station “Dahlip”, positioned with both tusks protruding outside of the stall barrier, and to allow multiple people to manipulate, saw, and treat a cavity for an indeterminate length of time.

### Materials Used

- Target buoy and ACME dog whistle, treats, and camera.
- Two 5-ft long metal poles to slide through existing brackets on stall barrier.
- Two hacksaws for trimming and a hose to keep the blade cool and free of ivory debris.
- Dilute bleach and plaster of Paris for temporary patching of cavity.
- Dental specialists used manual files to perform root canal, dilute bleach to flush and clean cavity, and calcium hydroxide was placed in the cavity to seal the area. Centrix Encore® composite resin paste was used to fill the cavity permanently.

### Training History

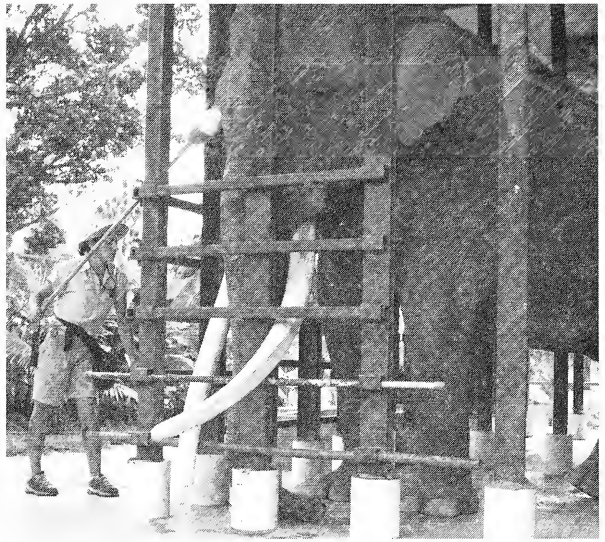
“Dahlip”, a 40-year-old Asian bull elephant (*Elephas maximus*), has primarily been trained by utilizing a guide in a protected contact program. He has had no history of target or whistle training. He is known to act fearful of new objects, and has backed away from training sessions which he finds difficult physically or mentally. Dahlip is a “creature of habit” and offers routinely asked behaviors based on the trainer’s body positioning despite the command used. When the trainer does not accept the behaviors he has offered, Dahlip becomes frustrated and backs away from the trainer. These circumstances required us to devise a new training plan which included conditioning to a bridge and target training to help for positioning. Target training was chosen since it could both help finely position the elephant, and by using a bridge to remove as much uncertainty as possible.

### Training Process

Training sessions were twice daily, for an average of 15 minutes, and over the span of 75 days. Dahlip was first introduced to bridge and reward sessions with the target in hand to desensitize him to the new object. Once Dahlip would readily approach the trainer with target, he was asked to

steady while the trainer slowly moved the target toward his forehead. Dahlip was rewarded for remaining steady and for allowing the buoy to gently touch his forehead. Dahlip was then asked to move up until he touched his forehead to the target. Dahlip quickly moved from targeting at short distances, to longer distances. Once Dahlip became consistent and eager to target, he was trained to touch his feet, and then his side to a second target.

Target trained, Dahlip could now be positioned in the stall without him offering any un-requested behaviors. Using the new command, "target", and the second target, Dahlip was positioned with his tusks around the desired stall post. Once positioned, Dahlip received a jackpot reward of whole produce and banana trees. Since he could still touch his forehead to the target without his tusks protruding outside of the stall, it was critical that he learned the reward only came when he wrapped his tusks around the post.



The author is pictured holding "Dahlip" steady on a target, with metal poles in place, prior to tusk trim for investigation of a cavity in the right tusk. *Photo by Terry Webb*

Using Dahlip's aptitude toward offering a behavior based on his trainer's body positioning, the desired position became a "station" quite easily. Soon, the target needed only to be placed on the post and when asked, "target", Dahlip would maneuver his 5plus-foot tusks around the post. Once stationing, we slowly inserted the 5-foot metal poles through the brackets. Dahlip was rewarded for remaining stationed as the poles were placed into position. We gradually increased the amount of time the two poles were in place before removing them and releasing him from station. Due to the crisscrossed tusks and pole placement, if Dahlip chose to back away quickly there might have been a chance he could damage a tusk, this did not occur.

Dahlip was comfortable with the poles in position we began desensitizing him to his tusks being touched. We started with a hand touching his tusk then introduced the hacksaw, followed by a gentle hose stream. Dahlip was rewarded each time his tusk was touched by a hand, saw, and hose stream. The length of time Dahlip was positioned and tusks manipulated was increased over the span of 10 sessions. Throughout the course of the training process we had varied numbers of people present. Since Dahlip did not respond negatively to the presence of the numbers of people or the veterinarian we did not find it to be a necessary step in the training process.

### **Conclusion**

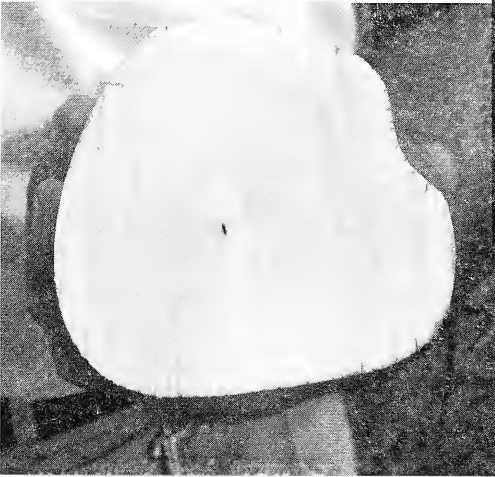
Since Dahlip was responding so well to training, 2 weeks later, tusk trim, and root canal on the cavity was scheduled. Dahlip remained stationed, with no acts of aggression, for the half-hour it took for both tusks to be trimmed, and for the one and a half-hours it took for the two dental specialists, to perform the root canal and permanent filling. Dahlip's trust and patience throughout the procedures assured us and our supervisors, that utilizing target training to accomplish our goal was successful, and will continue to be beneficial for Dahlip's daily husbandry needs.



**At Left:** View of cavity on exterior tip of the right tusk



**At Right:** View of cavity after the exterior was sawed off



**At Left:** View of cavity on exterior tip of the right tusk



*(All photos on this page by Tarah Bedrossian)*

### **Acknowledgments**

The author extends thanks to Eduardo Marrero, Lead Elephant Keeper, for support and assistance with training. I'd also like to thank Randall Tucker, Zoological Supervisor, Terry Webb, Mammal Curator, Dr. Christine Miller, Head Veterinarian, Steven Crews, Elephant Keeper for their assistance, and dental specialists Drs Randy Groeh and Richard Souviron, and their staff, for donating their time and expertise.

Feel free to contact the author directly if you would like more information. [bedtara@miamidade.gov](mailto:bedtara@miamidade.gov)

### ***ATC Comments:***

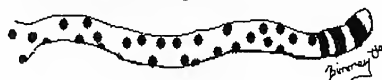
*The author has done an excellent job of demonstrating not only how to use positive reinforcement training to accomplish a specific medical goal, but how to implement a training program with*

potentially difficult, dangerous, or stubborn animals. The end result is similar to goals that any keeper can apply; in this case it was a tusk trim, but the same process could result in hand injections, blood draws, hoof trims, etc. Obviously specific attention must be paid to safety in handling and working around animals that could inadvertently (or otherwise) harm staff members, and the author has also demonstrated how these parameters were applied during the training process. Tarah illustrates quite nicely that you CAN teach an old dog (bull) new tricks!

## The Animal Training Committee Presents

Where you can share your training experiences!

### Training Tales...



Just a reminder, submit your "Training Tales" and experiences in operant conditioning to share with *Animal Keepers' Forum* readers. This opportunity provides a convenient outlet for you to exhibit your training challenges, methods and milestones with the AAZK member network. See a more detailed description of the Training Tales concept in the August 2006 AKF on page 331. Please submit entries based on the following guidelines:

- a) *Submit a brief description of a training project at your zoo (500 words or less, in text or bullet points). Details should include the following:*
  - *Define the training goal*
  - *List important steps*
  - *Timeline used*
  - *Tips you learned along the way*
- b) *Include 1-2 digital photos (jpg or tif) that clearly depict the animal in the learning process or performing the desired goal (list source and photographer of each image).*

*Please send entries or questions to: Jay Pratte at [jpratte@zooatlanta.org](mailto:jpratte@zooatlanta.org) (use Training Tales Entry as the subject line). Happy training!*

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- Breeding Common Wombats
- Pouches, Puggles, and Embryonic Diapause?? Making Sense of Monotreme and Marsupial Births
- Historical Perspectives on the Captive Management of Tree Kangaroos (*Dendrolagus Spp.*)
- Overcoming Aggression: Using Observable Changes in External Female Genitalia to Increase Breeding Introduction Success in Three-Banded Armadillos (*Tolypeutes Matuscus*)
- Frankie the Penguin's Fungal and Malaria Adventure
- Greater Flamingo with Capture Myopathy: Specialized Care and Husbandry
- What is the RKA?
- Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge: A Zoological Innovation
- Pregnancy & Parenting in the Zookeeping Profession: An Anecdotal Account from the St. Louis Zoo
- My First Year As a Zookeeper: Expectations Meet Reality
- The Evolution of Great Ape Exhibitory and Husbandry at Lincoln Park Zoo
- Breaking the Cycle: Hand-Rearing and Early Reintroduction As a Step Towards Appropriate Behavioral Development and Successful Family Bonding in Two Species of Callitrichids
- Daddy Daycare: Decision Making Using Siamang (*Hylobates Syndactylus*) Natural History
- Where's My Baby? A Patas Monkey Kidnapping Story
- Zoo Keeping – The Hardest Job I've Ever Loved
- "Kiboko"- The Integration of an All-Female Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus Amphibious*) Pod
- Amali, the Masai Giraffe
- Using Operant Conditioning to Manage Eastern Giant Eland (*Taurotragus Derbianus Gigas*) at Houston Zoo
- Communication, Safety, and Teamwork in Hoofstock Capture and Manual Restraint
- What You Could Do With Your Kudu!
- Zookeepers and Earthwatch Partner in Grevy's Zebra Conservation
- AAZK Fundraising Efforts Support The Northern Rangelands Endangered Species Program for Grevy's Zebra in Kenya
- Studies on the Hearing and Acoustic Behavior of a Pacific White-Sided Dolphin at Shedd Aquarium Through Western Illinois University's Graduate Certificate in Zoo/Aquaria Studies Program
- The Evolution of One Zoo Plus One University Equals One Great Collaboration
- What Does Not Kill Them (Or Us).....Is Called Enrichment!
- The Analysis of Olfactory Enrichment
- Beyond Bashing Tubs and Tires: Elephant Enrichment at Toronto Zoo
- The Road to Training is Paved with Good Impediments: Establishing and Implementing a Training Program
- Establishing a Training Program That Works for Your Department
- Using Desensitization and Positive Reinforcement Training to Ensure Giraffe Participation in Guest Hand-feeding on an 18-acre Mixed-species Savannah
- Target Training and Voluntary Blood Drawing of the Aldabra Tortoise
- Teaching Operant Conditioning Methods and Training Program Management in China
- Training 0.1 Reticulated Giraffe for Voluntary Transabdominal Sonograms Using Operant Conditioning and the Ttouch® Method
- Management of an Epileptic Grevy's Zebra via Blood Collection Training for Therapeutic Drug Monitoring
- The Snow Leopard Trust and Utah's Hogle Zoo: Partners for Conservation
- 2006 AAZK's Bowling for Rhinos - Sponsored by Blue Rhino® "Habitat Heroes"
- AAZK in Indonesia... the New Horizon for Bowling for Rhinos
- Overview of Lewa from the View of a Tour Guide
- AAZK Survey of Animal Care Professionals Summary of Findings
- Conditioning Five Female Semi-free-ranging Black Bears for Non-invasive Urine Collection
- The Evolution of Protected Contact Tapir Training at Disney's Animal Kingdom
- Zookeeping In Paradise (Abstract Only)
- Overview Of Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, and Black Rhino Status In Kenya (Abstract Only)

**POSTERS**

- Husbandry for a Elderly, Blind Kangaroo
- Movin' on Up: Meerkat "Condo" Training
- Breeding a Pair of Red-legged Honeycreepers (*Cyanerpes cyaneus*) at Lincoln Park Zoo
- Leaping Lizards: Training and Enrichment of a Caiman
- Elephants and Natural Flooring
- Gentoo Training – Introducing Twelve Penguins to Operant Conditioning
- Medical and Necropsy Survey Results (1993-2005) for Tree Kangaroos (*Dendrolagus spp.*) in North American Populations
- Identifying Motivational Factors Underlying Stereotypic Pacing in a Female Malayan Sun Bear
- Observations of Eastern Grey Kangaroo Births
- Injection Training North American River Otters
- The Ultimate Modular, Squeeze, and Shipping Crate
- Advances in Animal Keeping
- Hurricane Katrina: An Eye Opener
- Diving for Hippos
- Hoof Trimming Techniques for Domestic Ungulates
- Training a Female Babirusa (*Babyrousa babyrussa*) to Accept an Ultrasound Without Restraint



**WORKSHOP SUMMARIES**

- Understanding the Business Dynamics of AAZK
- Animal Training Foundations Workshop
- AAZK Enrichment Committee Discussion Session
- Education via Stealth: Creating Themed Animal Show Scripts
- Australasian Workshop
- Professional Development Workshop: Introduction to Studbooks and Population Management
- Professional Development Workshop: Observing Behavior: It isn't Rocket Science
- AAZK Enrichment Committee 2006 Device Workshop:  
"Shower Power; a self-initiated showering system"

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**2006 Conference Proceedings Order Form**

Cost of the 2006 Proceedings is \$25.00 for AAZK members and \$40.00 for nonmembers. Orders outside of the U.S. and Canada should add \$5.00 for airmail postage. One may order this CD online at [www.aazk.org](http://www.aazk.org) and click on "2006 Proceedings" or by calling AAZK Administrative Office at 1-785-273-9149 to purchase with a MasterCard or Visa credit card. You may also pay for a copy by sending a check or money order (**US Funds ONLY**) to: AAZK Administrative Office, 3601 SW 29<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 133, Topeka, KS 66614-2054 USA, Attn: Proceedings Order. Be sure to include your full name and preferred mailing address along with a daytime phone number and/or email address for order confirmation purposes.

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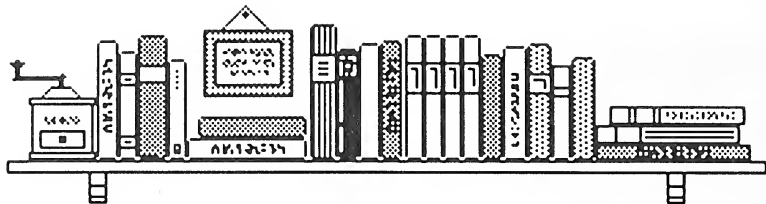
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# Book Reviews

## **Biology of the Boas and Pythons**

Edited by R.W. Henderson and R. Powell, 2007

Foreword by Richard Shine

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*From The Center for North American Herpetology  
Lawrence, Kansas <http://www.cnah.org>*

*Biology of the Boas and Pythons* is the product of a symposium (Biology of Boas, Pythons, and Related Taxa) held at the 2005 joint meetings of the ASIH-HL-SSAR and sponsored by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. This was the first ever attempt to bring together researchers actively working on some aspect of Boa and Python biology.

The symposium was a resounding success, and *Biology of the Boas and Pythons* represents a current assessment of our understanding of booid biology. Between the diversity of the peer-reviewed contributions and the literature reviews, this volume will become an essential reference for most future Boa and Python research.

This volume is edited by Robert W. Henderson (Milwaukee Public Museum) and Robert Powell (Avila University & member of the CNAH Board of Directors). It includes:

- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Ecology, Natural History, and Evolution
- Behavior
- Physiology, Neurology, and Reproductive Biology
- Conservation

CNAH Note 1: Highly recommended; will remain the premier source of basic information about Boas and Pythons for decades to come.

CNAH Note 2: For greater comprehension and ease of use, this book adopted the standard common names for North American species as listed in Collins & Taggart (2002, Standard Common and Current Scientific Names for North American Amphibians, Turtles, Reptiles, and Crocodylians. Fifth Edition).

To order the book, please visit:

<http://www.eaglemountainpublishing.com>

<http://www.rigorvtae.net>

or call 1-801-789-4149



DIVE INTO SOMETHING WILD!!



## Tentative Schedule

**Sunday, 30 September:** Icebreaker aboard the Colonel Paddlewheeler. Boarding will be from 7-8pm and we will be paddling around the bayou from 8-10pm.

**Monday, 1 October:** Papers 9am-6pm, workshops 7-10pm.

**Tuesday, 2 October:** Papers 9am-3pm, Zoo Olympics 3-6pm, Palm Beach Dinner 7-11pm.

**Wednesday, 3 October:** Papers 9am-12pm, Zoo Day 12-5pm, Silent Auction 7-10pm

**Thursday, 4 October:** Papers 9-11am, Business Meeting and Awards Luncheon noon - 3pm, Workshops 3-5pm, Banquet 6-10pm

We are having a themed banquet - *Splash into the 80's* - so look for more information on our website!

Look immediately following this insert for information on the Elephant and Oiled Wildlife Rescue Workshops being offered at Galveston. You **MUST** sign up for these workshops if you are interested and attendance is limited, so be certain to mark this on your registration form.

### **Do you have your Kinkajou footprint yet?**

We have animal artwork merchandise available for purchase. All proceeds will help fund the 2007 Conference. Penguin or kinkajou footprints are available on travel mugs (\$20), tote bags (\$15), note cards (\$10), and luggage tags (\$5). More information at [www.gcaazk.org](http://www.gcaazk.org) in the "Want to help?" conference section.

# 2007 AAZK National Conference

**See You All Soon! The beach will be waiting!**

30 September - 4 October (Sunday - Thursday)

Galveston, TX at Moody Gardens ([www.moodygardens.com](http://www.moodygardens.com))

Hosted by the Galveston Chapter of AAZK and Moody Gardens

Email: [conference@gcaazk.org](mailto:conference@gcaazk.org) Website: [www.gcaazk.org](http://www.gcaazk.org)

Phone: 800/582-4673 X4105 (This will reach our department secretary, Cheri, who can answer basic questions or direct your call to the appropriate chairperson)

Address: GCAAZK, 3220 Dominique, Galveston, TX 77554

## **FINAL Call for Papers, Posters and Workshops!**

**Deadline for abstract submission (papers, posters, workshops) is 1 August 2007**

All abstracts are to be submitted via the abstract submission form on our website. Electronic submission is preferred ([conference@gcaazk.org](mailto:conference@gcaazk.org)) but the form can also be downloaded and mailed to GCAAZK, 3220 Dominique, Galveston, TX 77554. The form has both addresses listed. Presenters will be notified by 1 September.

Conference theme is "*Dive into something WILD!*" This is a field where we dive in head first and sometimes have to swim against the current. What have you done to lead the school, avoid "predators", or find new ways to migrate through the waters? Papers regarding leadership, innovation, and program development are encouraged. We especially want to hear from those of you who work with animals from down under – water that is. Share your knowledge of husbandry, training, enrichment, conservation, and any other pertinent topic regarding the animals of the lands and waters we strive to protect. Come and explore ideas as deep and diverse as the oceans themselves!

## **Hotel Info**

**Deadline for registration is 9 September.**

The host hotel is on Moody Gardens' property. The room rate is \$135.00 per night. To receive this rate mention "Group ID" as 7749 and "Password" as 4305. Reservations are preferred online at [www.moodygardenshotel.com](http://www.moodygardenshotel.com) but can also be made by calling 1-888-388-8484. The address is Moody Gardens Hotel, 4 Hope Blvd, Galveston, TX 77554.

## **Airline & Airport Info**

Our host airline is Continental, which is offering a 2-15% discount, depending on which fare you use. Mention code ZVD6 to receive your discount. If you book online at [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com) you will also receive an extra 3% discount!

Houston Hobby (HOU) is the closest airport and is a HUB for Southwest Airlines. It is ~45 minutes from Moody Gardens. Airport information can be found at [www.fly2houston.com/hobbyHome](http://www.fly2houston.com/hobbyHome). Bush Intercontinental (IAH) is the larger airport and is a HUB for Continental Airlines. It is ~80 minutes from Moody Gardens. Airport information can be found at [www.fly2houston.com/iahHome](http://www.fly2houston.com/iahHome).

Galveston Limousine runs a shuttle from both airports to the hotel. Reservations are recommended by phone or website. Mention you are with the AAZK conference to receive a \$5 round-trip discount. Please let them know your destination is the Moody Gardens Hotel. [www.galvestonlimousineservice.com](http://www.galvestonlimousineservice.com) 1-800-640.4826

If you'd rather rent a car & drive to the island, our host car rental company is Avis. The discount is variable (from 5-20%) depending on the vehicle and length of rental. Please mention the conference discount number J868962 when making your reservation. Online reservations are preferred at [www.avis.com](http://www.avis.com) but can also be made by calling 1-800-331-1600. Avis is offering this discount from 23 September-11 October. There is free parking at Moody Gardens!

## **Post-Trip Info**

*POST-Conference TRIP:* This trip will be on Friday, 5 October to the Houston Zoo from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and to Landry's Downtown Aquarium from 4-6 p.m. Free admission to each facility, behind-the-scenes tours, lunch provided at the Zoo and hors d'oeuvres provided at the Aquarium! We can accommodate 50 people with a cost of \$30 per person. Check the box on the registration form if you'd like to see what Houston has to offer.

## **Guess Who's 40?**

Happy Birthday, AAZK! Did you know AAZK's 40th birthday is this year? Help us celebrate the growth and future of this fabulous organization at this year's conference. We'd like to prepare a slide show of the past 40 years for the conference and need your help. Send us your photos of conferences, keepers, or other great zoo keeping moments. Who's the long-time member of AAZK at your facility? Know any animals that have been around since AAZK's inception? How has your AAZK Chapter grown? We want to know! Email them to [conference@gcaazk.org](mailto:conference@gcaazk.org) or send them to GCAAZK, 3220 Dominique, Galveston, TX 77551. Please include at which conference or facility the photos were taken.



2007 AAZK National Conference  
 Moody Gardens, Galveston, TX  
 30 September - 4 October

DIVE INTO SOMETHING WILD!!



Conference Registration Form  
 (Please type or print clearly)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov.: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Presenting a Paper/Poster/Wokshop? (please circle)      Vegetarian? Yes    No

Bringing an Auction item? Yes    No (auction items may be sent to GCAAZK, c/o Paula Kolvig, 3220 Dominique, Galveston, TX 77554; OR brought to the conference)

**\*\*\*Deadline for registration is 30 August. A late fee of \$25 will be applied\*\*\*  
 to all registrations from 1 September to 4 October.**

The registration form (on the website - [www.gcaazk.org](http://www.gcaazk.org)) can either be downloaded and mailed to us (must be postmarked **by 31 August** to avoid the late fee) or sent as an attachment with an email. Payments can be made by check (payable to GCAAZK) and mailed to: GCAAZK, 3220 Dominique, Galveston, TX 77554 or paid via PayPal if registering online.

**Registration Fees:**

AAZK Member	\$175.00 US	_____
AAZK Spouse	\$175.00 US	_____
Non-Member	\$225.00 US	_____

**Daily Rates:**

Icebreaker (30 Sept) aboard the Colonel Paddlewheeler	\$ 40.00	_____
Monday (1 Oct)	\$ 25.00	_____
Tuesday (2 Oct)	\$ 40.00	_____
Wednesday (3 Oct)	\$ 40.00	_____
Thursday (4 Oct)	\$ 45.00	_____
Banquet (4 Oct)	\$ 55.00	_____
Post-Conference Trip (5 Oct)	\$ 30.00	_____

(Space is limited to 50 people!)

**Don't Forget Your T-Shirt!**



**Total Fee Enclosed**      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Each conference registrant will receive one free t-shirt. Shirts available in long or short sleeve. Please circle your size and style preference. S M L Xlg XXlg XXXlg short sleeve or long Extra shirts will be available to purchase at \$10 for short sleeve and \$15 for long sleeve.

• Fees include a \$50 contribution to AAZK, Inc. Fee does not include Conference Proceedings

# **2007 Conference Offers Elephant Workshop**

An Elephant Workshop will also be held in conjunction the Galveston AAZK Conference. It is free of charge but space is limited. This one-day workshop will be on Tuesday, 2 October from 8am until 5pm in the Moody Gardens Aquarium's Pompano Room. Topics for professional elephant keepers include training theory, enrichment, husbandry, problem-solving and animal rights/public relations. To register to attend this workshop, be sure and check the box on the conference registration form that you will be attending. Below is an outline of this Workshop.

## **AAZK Elephant Workshop Topics**

### **1. Training Theory**

This section is a PowerPoint® presentation covering some basic training theory. The topics that will be addressed are:

- classical conditioning vs operant conditioning
- reinforcement vs punishment
- four quadrants of operant conditioning

The underlying theme for this section is that even though we might not know the theory, we use these concepts everyday with our elephants. Our elephants behavior is determined by their consequences and we are constantly reinforcing and punishing behaviour whether it's intentional or not.

### **2. Management Systems/Husbandry**

This section is a PowerPoint® and video presentation covering the different management systems that are used for elephants and the main husbandry behaviors that every elephant program should have. The management systems that are going to be addressed are:

- Free contact
- Protected contact
- Confined contact

The underlying theme is that these are management systems, not methods to train elephants and that the training concepts that were discussed in the previous section are equally used in all management systems. The husbandry section is going to address:

- Baths
- Blood Collection
- Enema/Urogenital exam
- Exercise
- Eye and Ear exam
- Foot Care
- Elephant weights
- Muscle injection
- Oral exam
- Oral medication
- Restraint
- Swabs and Urine collection
- Trunk Wash

All of these sections will be addressed for all management systems.

### **3. Enrichment**

This will be a PowerPoint® and video presentation about elephant enrichment. Topics covered are:

- How to implement an enrichment program
- Record keeping
- Examples of elephant enrichment

The underlying theme is that enrichment is not something extra; it's an integral part of the daily routine. Implementing a system that is "ease of use" is vital to ensure that enrichment becomes a part of the daily routine. Various examples of elephant enrichment will be shown to give participants ideas that they can use with their elephants.

### **4. Problem Solving**

This will be a PowerPoint® presentation that will offer a problem solving model for keepers to use as a tool to help them problem solve. The problem solving model will be presented and at least 1 problem will be worked using the model. Before the workshop the participants will be asked to submit a brief description of an elephant problem that they have in their program. The instructors will pick 1 or 2 problems (time depending) to work through with the participants.

## 5. Aggression

This will be a PowerPoint® and video presentation that will address elephant aggression. The emphasis will be to prevent aggression, not on how to deal with aggression. The topics that will be addressed are:

- Identifying scenarios where your elephants may be aggressive
- Identifying precursors to aggression
- Methods to avoid aggression
- Identify your limitations

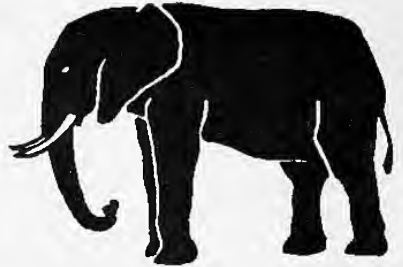
Various videos will be shown of elephant aggression.

## 6. Animal Rights

This will be a PowerPoint® and video presentation covering how the animal rights groups are associated with elephant management. The major “concerns/problems” that animal rights groups have with elephants in captivity will be addressed along with the methods that are used to support their cause.

## 7. Public Relations/Selling an Elephant Program

This will be a PowerPoint® presentation offering suggestions on how an elephant program and an institution can deal with animal rights groups. Suggestions on how an elephant program can be used to gain public support will be discussed.



## Oiled Wildlife Response Workshop to Be Held in Galveston

Moody Gardens is proud to be hosting an Oiled Wildlife Response Workshop October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Galveston, TX. The workshop, taught by Wildlife Rehab and Education Wildlife Center in conjunction with Texas General Land Office, will include speakers from the U.S. Coast Guard, veterinarians, and experts from the response field. This hands-on workshop will combine both classroom lectures and laboratory exercises to encompass all aspects of an oiled wildlife emergency response.

In conjunction with the American Association of Zoo Keepers National Conference being held at Moody Gardens September 30 thru October 4, a 24-hour Hazardous Response training option is available and recommended due to predicted changes in government regulations. Workshops such as Animal Handling and Restraint and Zoo/Aquarium Safety as well as four additional hours of appropriate training will be offered. This, along with the 16 hours of oiled wildlife training, will allow the candidate to be eligible to receive a 24-hour OSHA certification.

**The training required for the 24-hour course will begin with an evening two-hour workshop on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, continuing with four hours of training on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 10 hours on the 5<sup>th</sup> and eight hours on the 6<sup>th</sup>. All must be attended for certification.**

Cost for the class is as follows: 24-hour OSHA certification class - \$150.00 alone or \$75.00 in addition to Conference attendance. Fees include all materials and breakfast and lunch on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, and dinner on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Hotel costs are \$135.00/night at the Moody Gardens Hotel. For the 16-hour training class the cost is \$75.00 (does not include OSHA certification).

For registration or information contact Diane Olsen at 409-683-4102 or [dolsen@moodygardens](mailto:dolsen@moodygardens)

# *Zoo Keeping – the hardest job I’ve ever loved*

*By Judie Steenberg, Retired Zoo Keeper,  
Advisor – Tree Kangaroo SSP®  
Maplewood, MN*

## **Introduction**

When asked to present this Keynote Address at the AAZK National Conference, the first question was what to call it. In 1995, I presented a paper titled: *Then and Now – 20 years of Zoo Keeping*. Most of what follows is from that paper which has been updated to include changes in the profession over the last ten years.

During my Zoo Keeping career I worked at four different zoological facilities and volunteered at yet a fifth zoo. I’ve visited over 70 zoos and have been in contact with Keepers from zoos around the world. Whenever I give an example during this presentation it is intended to be “generic” and not to be identified with a specific institution.

*Zoo Keeping – the hardest job I’ve ever loved* is how I have always felt about the work of zoo keeping.

*Physically:* a Keeper must stay fit for the job. It requires strength, flexibility and stamina. A keeper should be ready to do whatever is needed, whenever it’s needed. Gender and size need not be an issue. I’ve worked with very strong small Keepers and some seemingly-strong large Keepers, who were not strong

*Intellectually:* Keepers must  
-be interested in, and learn about the past and the lessons to be learned from the mistakes and success of our forebearers  
-be up-to-date on current practices and husbandry protocols  
-be working with a plan for the future of all of the animals in their care

*Emotionally:* a Keeper must not let emotions rule in communications and husbandry practices; being objective can be one of the hardest parts of the job.

These are everyday expectations and often challenges, but it’s all worth it.

You might not like, or agree, with some of what follows: Keepers in general can be opinionated, and I’m certainly no exception.

There is a Zoo Keeper’s affliction which I call “**C-N-S**” that I’ve personally experienced and have seen in some of my co-Keepers wherever I’ve worked. “**C-N-S**” stands for Criticism, Negativism and Skepticism and it can really get in the way of being an effective Keeper. The more you learn to minimize these attitudes, the more successful you will be as a Keeper. These tendencies might never really go away, but the harder you can work at them the better you will become at managing these inclinations.

There is another condition, which I call “**P-M-S**”, which applies to both genders: **Piss and Moan Syndrome**. This can be very contagious and is a waste of time and energy. If something is really wrong and needs fixing and/or changing - what can YOU do about it, to improve or remedy the problem?

Two major causes of both of these problems can be: under-staffing and low morale. You might have to work hard at overcoming these obstacles, but if you can you’ll be a better Keeper and more successful at being an advocate for the animals in your care.

## **On the way to NOW**

After five years as a Docent in a small, city-operated Midwest zoo, I became a Zoo Keeper. Actually, I didn't like or approve of zoos back in the 70s, and became a Keeper because I've always felt the best way to change something is to get directly involved. My first job as a Keeper was at another small, city-operated zoo, and I quickly learned one of the most valuable lessons a Keeper must learn.

**All animals are important.....no animal is insignificant.  
They all deserve the best care we can give them.**

I became a Keeper in 1975, and during the three decades since there have been many significant improvements in zoo animal care and welfare, in exhibitry, health, nutrition and record keeping. In 1975, most zoos did not have a Zoo Vet, much less an Animal Health Department. Nutrition was beginning to take on importance in zoo animal health. However, one zoo I worked at fed "Dunkin' Donuts" and road kills throughout the zoo. Record keeping was on index cards, or in Keepers' notebooks.

My "dream", when I became a Keeper, was to eventually care for tigers, and I got lucky! During my first year as a Keeper I was assigned as a Relief Keeper on the cat/bear string. And, yes, taking care of the tigers was special...but so were the fruit bats, Arctic fox, elephants, llamas, kudu, Andean condors and all sorts of birds, mammals and reptiles. There was an unforgettable pair of white-bearded gnu and a special family of golden eagles.

As a Relief Keeper, I trained on seven out of eight routines and had the wonderful experience of learning about diversity in the animal kingdom. Almost all of the Keepers I worked with shared their excitement and knowledge about their special animals and gave me insight and a deep sense of appreciation of animals as a species, as individuals within a species, or as a small family group. It was also my first experience with OJT (on-the-job) Keeper training. It was, one-day watching, one-day helping and one-day doing before you were on your own.

I had become a Keeper so I could make a difference...sound familiar? Again, I got lucky and had an opportunity to work with some very dedicated people and became part of the team that worked with a breeding pair of golden eagles. That year TWO chicks were successfully parent-reared, instead of the usual one chick.

The first year of zoo keeping was a year of enlightenment; *many things were not as they seemed before getting involved at the Keeper level*...some things were better, some things worse than what I had perceived the work would be like. As a rookie Keeper I got into trouble for taking notes on the animals throughout the day; one of the supervisors thought I was keeping book on him and we ended up in the Director's office!

Unfortunately, not all Keepers realized that one of the most important parts of our job is to share experience and knowledge with those who will follow us. There is one conversation that I'll never forget. When I asked a veteran Keeper for information I was told it was "...a professional secret". Wow! Is that a contradiction or what! In zoo keeping there is nothing professional about keeping secrets. A few other "old-timers" simply said they had learned the hard way and I could too! Sadly, the very animals we are responsible for sometimes pay the price when rookie Keepers have to reinvent the wheel. A true professional Keeper is knowledgeable and knows the importance of sharing that knowledge for the benefit of all concerned. Unfortunately, 20 years later I still heard the comment "...learn it the hard way...". Is that still the case at your Zoo?

## **Communication**

The Rookie Keeper - I learned early on just how very important one basic component of zoo keeping was going to be - *communication*. A Keeper is the first person to begin to interpret the needs of the animals in his or her care. How well we, as individuals, relay this information on the needs of the animals is basically what zoo keeping is all about...we are the voice of the animals. How well we communicate and interact with our co-workers and the administration is directly related to our effectiveness as Keepers. We also have a responsibility to share failure as well as



success with those who will follow in our footsteps. How well one communicates and shares information in their position as a Keeper is essential to how effective they will be on the job.

As a new “gung-ho” rookie Keeper, I soon became aware of the importance of note-taking and not relying on memory. One of the first Keepers I worked with suggested carrying a note pad and pen...preferably a brightly colored pen that could be easily seen and therefore retrieved if accidentally dropped in an animal area...to that I would add KEEP THE PEN IN AN INSIDE POCKET. I lost a bright orange pen in the gun yard and found it quite sometime later...way out in the exhibit yard, well chewed. My heart sank when I thought of what that pen could have done to a ruminant stomach if swallowed.

Throughout my career, I carried a pen and notebook. Hardly a day went by that something wasn't noted to add to the Keeper's Daybook, the daily report or for future reference. “Nothing happened today...” is hard for me to imagine. Another veteran Keeper once told me that if you fail to see something, it's because you're not paying attention! Granted, every day is not going to yield an inspiring situation or insight. However, often a seemingly insignificant behavior or event can fit into the bigger picture.

Time spent, after normal work hours, just observing the animals often gave me insight into what was normal for a particular animal, or led me to a better understanding of group dynamics

Other Departments and the Kiddies' Zoo - The benefits of having a commissary, maintenance and horticulture departments, as well as animal health and quarantine facilities became quite apparent at yet another zoo. I've always felt that as Keepers we need the support of other departments to do our jobs effectively. Primarily, the animals are the focus, the Keeper is the caretaker/interpreter and the rest of the zoo departments are the support staff for the animals in the zoo. We need each other and need to work together for the benefit of the animals...the animals do not have choices, only people do. We can choose to work with people, to benefit the animals, or not!

How well Keepers interact with various departments can directly affect how well we can care for the animals. Having the right food, tools and supplies from the commissary, the assistance from maintenance to keep the physical plant operational and safe, the help from horticulture to enhance and enrich the exhibits and zoo grounds, the messages and lessons put forth by the education department and the aid of the animal health staff to prevent disease and treat sick or injured animals are all important parts of a zoo's operation. Don't get me wrong; everything is not always sunshine and roses and not everyone always works together effectively....it's a matter of communication, and it requires continuous effort to achieve.

Not having to unload a trailer full of hay bales, to fixing broken gates and equipment, or cleaning the public toilets (*yes we did that*), to having plants delivered and planted, and especially having animal health staff available to provide support were greatly valued. Appreciate what you have; some zoos still do not have these support systems. Keepers at those facilities still have to do many tasks that detract from animal care. By having these various departments available, a Keeper can concentrate on the daily care of the animals.

The interactions between Keepers and each of these departments depends a great deal on effective communication (there's that word again)...and, as already stated, it is not always easy. Obstacles that you will need to deal with include: personality clashes, territorialism, lack of respect or appreciation for each other's position and work, and some people just not doing their jobs. But, it's worth the effort to develop cooperative working relationships....consider the alternative. It helps to keep the objective of animal care and welfare in the forefront. Recent articles in Animal Keepers' Forum give advice and techniques on working with various personalities, which should be helpful. (*Editor's Note: See People Skills for Animal People, February and April 2006 issues.*)

Until I actually worked in a Children's Zoo I saw no value in having a “Kiddies' Zoo” and really believed that the space and money spent on such an attraction would be better used elsewhere. However, I now believe the best way for a child to learn about and appreciate living animals is through “touching” a rabbit, a goat, a chicken or other domestic animal in a *controlled* situation.

While I have long believed that using exotic animals in “shows” had the effect of diminishing that healthy “mystique” we have about wild animals, and I still do, my understanding of the importance of children coming in contact with domestic animals was changed. It is an opportunity for children to learn gentleness and respect for the animals, under the guidance of volunteers or their parents. This is a life lesson that could benefit all concerned; a lesson that cannot be communicated as effectively through any other method.

Educating the public is part of our job, whether we like it or not....whether we want to actively participate in it or not. I'll never forget the expression on the face of a 12 year-old girl when she learned that milk came out of the body of a cow rather than a carton...she really did not want to believe what she was seeing! Another memorable moment was in front of a bull snake display we had set up in the American barn with a graphic that explained how many rodents this snake was capable of eating in a year...and how much wheat those rodents would eat! The dollar figure was substantial...around \$500.00 as I recall. One Sunday I overheard a wheat farmer tell his teenage son that they had better “...stop killing those snakes from now on, it's costing us money!” That was probably my first experience with “*in-situ*” conservation.

Teenagers -The future of wildlife depends not only on what we can do NOW, but what others will do in the future. This came to light at yet another zoo that was basically a private operation on city-owned land; the zoo prided itself on being self-sufficient and not taking public money. Everybody did everything including spinning cotton candy and driving the “train” on busy Sunday afternoons. To provide a learning experience for young people, and to enlist the aid of youthful, energetic volunteers, several programs were started for teenagers, including a Girl Scout badge program. Communicating with teenagers was most interesting, to say the least, but also very rewarding. Despite forewarnings about some of the participants, there were no serious problems while they were in the program learning about the zoo and sharing what they learned with younger children. To a person they left with a greater respect for the zoo and the animals they had been involved with.

From Bars and Boredom to Plants and Enrichment - In a small exhibits building, which emphasized local fauna such as pack rats, snakes and ground squirrels, I learned an important lesson on how zoo visitors perceive the animals; their understanding related directly to how we exhibit them. By taking small bare aquariums and cages and turning them into mini-habitats by painting murals on the back and using natural items such as grasses, twigs leaves and moss, the animals became more popular with the public. The result was a longer viewing time at these exhibits and more favorable comments about the animals by the zoo visitors. I believe we communicated a sense of “habitat” to these people and a better understanding of their local fauna. The pack rat exhibit was very popular and often had people lined up to get a good look at what was going on.

At one zoo I worked at, the people of the city supported it by donating food from their freezers, and farmers and ranchers often gave the zoo their aged or injured cows and horses to feed to the carnivores. We also received frequent calls from the state wildlife department, as well as the public, about road-killed deer. Although picking up these animals took place at all hours of the day and night, and butchering had to be done promptly....the carnivores at that zoo were some of the healthiest I've ever seen. A 24-year-old female cougar, that died peacefully in her favorite resting-place, still looked in prime condition despite her age. Whole carcasses were often fed, including stillborn calves. It was my first experience with “enrichment” as we know it today...back then we called it “occupation”.

The real first challenge with planted exhibits came at the same time I learned to care for small birds in an aviary. Although it was an old building, the Keepers had filled the exhibits with soil and planted them with live plants, creating “habitat” displays. My first lesson, in addition to learning about a group of animals I had absolutely no experience with, was to learn which plants were non-toxic and how birds used plants in terms of nest sites, perching and playthings. Lories seemed to delight in nipping off the small branchlets of a Norfolk Island pine and watch them flutter to the ground only to repeat the process over and over again. Pepper spray, on the plants, had absolutely no effect on the birds' destructive behavior.

I not only survived that initiation, but learned to appreciate a whole new group of animals. Again,

communication was the key to success. A young Assistant Keeper, despite being paid far less than me and who was technically under my supervision, was my teacher in that aviary. I'll always be grateful to him for sharing his knowledge and expertise, and for his guidance during a very difficult year in an antiquated building, filled with small birds and plants that I had virtually no experience with and a constantly rotating Keeper staff. No one wanted to work in that Unit. During the 15 months I was assigned to that area as the Unit Keeper, I worked with a total of eight other Keepers. Historically, no one worked in that area any longer than they had to. It was a difficult assignment and when I transferred out my successes were:

1. no rat-killed birds for one year
2. the cockroach infestation was under control, and
3. no one had thrown a gong brush at anyone else...(I did hose down a co-worker one day though, when he was overbearing...surprised myself as much as him, actually!)

...it was the year I got shingles and learned what job-related stress meant!

As a side note, I later learned that the overall champion challenger in the bird world is the Kea. They are the most frustrating and wonderful birds I've ever worked with. Everything you might have read about these mischievous birds is true and then some.

Getting Involved with a Species - Back in the 1970s, while working on a Bachelor's degree in "Zoo Operations and Animal Management", Dr. Ulysses Seal was my Major Advisor at the University of Minnesota. At that time he was also still involved in the development of ISIS®, served on the Minnesota State Zoo Board and was talking about special programs to save species; these would later be called Species Survival Plans® (SSPs). As the SSPs developed in the early 1980s, I asked Dr. Seal how a Keeper could be involved in these programs. His answer was to pick a species and learn all about it. When I asked which species he would recommend he said the day would come when all animals in zoos would be managed in terms of conservation, and each species as well as individuals would be looked at in terms of the space they occupied. Dr. Seal advised that the more one knew about a given species or group of animals, the more helpful they could be when that time came. My species turned out to be the Matschie's tree kangaroo (*Dendrolagus matschiei*).

The first group of Matschie's tree kangaroos I worked with were kept in the largest indoor exhibit I've seen, to date....it was an old giraffe house. Not only was there nine upright, 17-foot tall trees, but a whole network of cross-branching and leaning trees. It seemed more than enough space for four tree kangaroos....afterall it had contained three adult giraffe! Even Larry Collins, the "expert" on tree kangaroo husbandry, thought it might be possible to keep the male and three females together. However, giraffe are social animals and we learned that while tree kangaroos may tolerate each other's presence, reproduction was severely suppressed, even in that large exhibit.

After a period of trial and error, with various combinations of individual tree kangaroos being kept together...and a total of ten dead joeys (100% loss), the exhibit was divided and each female was given her own "space" in which to rear her joey. The thought of quitting occurred every time a joey was lost. After establishing a protocol, and providing suitable space for pouch-gravid females, there was a 100% survival of subsequent tree kangaroo joeys at that zoo during my tenure. During the time of trial and error, communications were sometimes very difficult, but we kept trying to work through the problem and come up with a compromise solution. The whole process turned into a carefully documented study that included:

- learning what needed to be done (i.e. separating conspecifics from pouch-gravid females)
- documenting the behavior of the collection
- working with University students on behavioral research projects
- collecting and sharing information on a world-wide basis
- compiling the Tree Kangaroo Husbandry Notebook
- establishing the Tree Kangaroo SSP®.

This was all the direct result of persistent communication.

Perhaps the most difficult paper I've ever had to present was in 1988 at an American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA a.k.a. AZA) regional conference....about those ten dead tree kangaroo joeys. The paper also reported the complete turn-around as a result of separating pouch-gravid females, and other zoos housing Matschie's tree kangaroos took heed. In 1988, seven Matschie's tree kangaroo births were reported, with five surviving. In 1989, after that presentation and the distribution of the Tree Kangaroo Husbandry Notebook, the number of births doubled to 14 with 10 joeys surviving, a 100% increase in one year.

At the AAZK Conference in Chicago, earlier this year, I presented a paper on the *Historical Perspectives on the Captive Management of Tree Kangaroos*. Unfortunately, our success in the early 1990s with breeding tree kangaroos in captivity did not continue into the late 1990s and 2000s. The current population of Goodfellow's (*D. goodfellowi*) tree kangaroos is 11 in North American collections and Matschie's are down to 52 individuals with a breeding population around 43 animals. Grizzled tree kangaroos (*D. inustus*) have become extinct in North American collections, Goodfellow's are on their way out and Matschie's are "on the edge". Over the past 15 years we have truly watched the rise and fall of tree kangaroos in North American collections. Can we turn it around? Maybe! It will take a tremendous amount of cooperation and adherence to the TKSSP protocols and optimal communication. The question is: Are today's zoological institutions up to that challenge?

Networking and "Getting Along" - From the first day working with tree kangaroos, back in 1982 until coordinating the fundraising of \$38,000 for the TKSSP Avian TB Research Project, I've been engaged in an on-going dialogue and effort to properly manage and conserve tree kangaroos, especially in our captive collections. In 1992, there were only two Keepers who were SSP® Coordinators and it was sometimes very challenging to communicate with curators and directors. However, once I put on my SSP® Coordinator's hat I took on a whole new set of responsibilities and quickly learned new techniques to communicate the needs of the animals.

Methods of communication have advanced from airmail letters and long distance calls to fax machines and e-mail. The Internet provides many avenues through which to share information. In addition to learning the skills of communication, Keepers must stay current with technology to keep pace in this 'information age'.

To close on the subject of communication, I'd like to share what was a most important lesson during those early years as a Keeper. You won't always like the people you are working with, but it isn't necessary to like someone to work effectively with them...it's an important step in becoming a professional Keeper. Effective communication requires an ongoing effort. The players change, the circumstances change, and your own attitude and moods will change from time to time. All of this requires adjustments in when, where and how to communicate those all-important messages regarding the animals in your care.

Over the years I've taken a few classes that have helped a great deal, such as: Interpersonal Communications; Effective Writing for non-Supervisors; Conflict Resolution; and Effective Public Speaking

### **The Big Five**

There are five character traits that come to light over and over when I look back on the profession of zoo keeping. The importance of these qualities really hasn't changed since 1975.

#### Common Sense

The element of common sense is inter-woven throughout the whole of a zoo's operation and a Zoo Keeper's work. It really isn't something one can just learn but can be explained as being the result of our life experiences and realizing how the world around us works. It is essential in our work as Zoo Keepers.

#### Initiative

While there are parameters within which a Keeper performs their duties, there needs to be initiative to improve and change things when necessary, and when coupled with common sense, to make

decisions as warranted. I remember a Zoo Vet advising a group of Keepers that KUO (Keep Under Observation) meant to work with, and to keep the animal health department advised...it did not mean WID (Watch it Die), to wait too long. At the time I felt a bit miffed that the Vet thought a Keeper might WID, when in fact that is actually what had just about happened, making the reminder necessary. Initiative is the opposite of apathy, which has no place in the Zoo profession.

There are times when it's better to act and then seek forgiveness if you've erred rather than wait too long or wish you'd said or done something, but didn't. I did that once...because I was a rookie Keeper and didn't think I had anything to offer, I didn't speak out soon enough and an animal died. It might have died anyway, but the information I could have offered might have helped...we'll never know.

### Flexibility

Over the years I've had a wide range of supervisors, from one extreme to another. One insisted that the cleaning/feeding, etc be done EXACTLY as demonstrated while another gave Keepers totally free rein in decision-making and taking action. I didn't like either management style but learned to work with each of them.

Don't be too rigid. A too set routine can adversely affect animals as much as too much variation, or no routine at all. For example: At one zoo, it was a "rare", and usually upsetting occasion when more than the Keeper entered the animal area. The only time there was more than one person in the area was when an animal was to be immobilized or some other equally traumatic situation. At another zoo it was routine to carefully condition the animals to the approach of other Keepers, Volunteers and especially Veterinary Staff, "just to look". The animals at the second zoo were much more manageable and in better overall health.

Inflexibility, being too set in your ways, can inhibit progress and enhancement of the lives of the animals in your care. Remember, "flexibility" means "adaptability" and we need to be capable of that, too. Again: to share past words of advice, be careful not to let your feelings about a person negate what they may be suggesting. There have been times when suggestions for changes were made which irritated me. At the time the suggestion may have seemed "impractical" or "not feasible", but some turned out to be good ideas. Keep an open mind and evaluate ideas and suggestions from others. Work with your co-workers.

### Turning a Mistake into a Lesson

Being unable to admit a mistake means you're not going to learn from it. Everyone is going to make mistakes at one time or another. Unfortunately, as Keepers, our mistakes often have an effect on the welfare of the animals in our care.

Take time to analyze what went wrong, discuss the situation with others, and debrief if necessary. Follow through with any changes needed to prevent recurrence. There seems to be a rule in zoos that if something goes wrong and nothing is done to change the situation, or improve a condition, it will happen again.

The biggest mistake of all is to not learn from it and share the experience with others so they don't repeat the error. It can be very hard to do this and means setting one's ego aside. Remember....the ugliest animal in the Zoo is EGO; don't let it get in the way of animal welfare.

Don't make the mistake of thinking you know it all. READ, LISTEN AND LEARN.... and ask questions....learn from the experiences and errors of the past. There is a whole history out there that would serve you well.

### Prioritize and Focus

Choose your challenges and battles carefully. You can use up a whole lot of energy on petty matters. Rest assured, I speak from experience here. It's hard to be upbeat and optimistic quite a bit of the time because of the very nature of this business. But, think about what's really important and what you hope to achieve. While we cannot always control what happens...we can control our own reactions. We can choose to be depressed and share that negativism with whoever will listen, or we can try to make a difference. Ask yourself, what are you going to do about it?

If there is truly nothing you can do about a situation, what good does it do to let it keep you down, and/or just complain about it? Use your energy to be a better Keeper, focus on where you can make a difference.

The TKSSP was my focus...it was my opportunity to make a difference. As I became more involved with it, I became less involved with minor issues. They take time and drain your energy. Time is a precious commodity....don't waste it.

## What's New?

### Keeper Training

Throughout my career, in addition to working with tree kangaroo conservation, I have had a strong interest in Keeper Training. It has always been a mystery to me how the zoo world touts Zoo Keeping as a profession, and expects professionalism from Keepers, but did so little for many, many years to properly train Keepers. Perhaps the very nature of the work, being many-faceted, has made it difficult to come up with a program that accomplishes the task. At many zoos, Keeper Training seems to be an on again/off again effort and is rarely budgeted for.

Most zoos do not really have a comprehensive Keeper Training Program, and at best hope to hire experienced Keepers. AAZK and Animal Keepers' Forum has been the mainstay for many of us and will continue to be so. Conferences have always been the opportunity to learn and share information and ideas, and the Internet certainly has made that easier. Traditionally, Keeper Training occurs on an individual basis; Keepers must be self-directed and seek out the knowledge they need to succeed. Veteran Keepers have the serious responsibility of mentoring new Keepers

At the 1995 AAZPA (a.k.a. AZA) conference there was a session entitled "Sustaining Our Future: Strategies for Staff Training and Development". It was very encouraging, I don't recall a session quite like it at conferences for the 20 previous years I'd been attending them. At this session, the presentations and panel discussions by Curators and a Director gave good reason to be optimistic that Keeper Training would eventually be looked upon as not only important, but would be a measure of a zoo's operation.

One presentation emphasized that husbandry is now a "science" and stated:

- Keepers should not only be viewed as professional but should be expected to be professional
- Keepers need projects to call their own to utilize different skills and perceptions of job satisfaction
- Give training and guidance and, very importantly, mutual respect
- Review equipment to make zoo keeping more efficient

Another presentation, by a Zoo Director, was also encouraging. He gave the following advice:

- Hire good people and get out of their way
- A Zoo Director should be a facilitator, a conductor, to keep everything in sync
- Teach, motivate, be the person to allow it to happen
- Give responsibility, be a leader, a team builder, provide the resources
- Strive for input...if item 17 out of a list of 20 is a good idea, emphasize it....don't stifle ideas

For many years, several of us involved with the AAZK Education Committee tried, with limited success, to have Keeper Training included within past AZA committees. The good news is that in 2001, AAZK and AZA finally joined forces and put together the *Advances in Animal Keeping* course. Over the past three years the course was held at three different locations (Houston, Sacramento and Omaha), and is taught by both AAZK and AZA instructors. Oh, what I would have given to have had such a course available during my early years of animal care. Whether you are a rookie or veteran Keeper, consider attending this course. Hopefully, zoos will start budgeting for continuing-education opportunities such as this.

### The Five-Day Keeper:

From recent conversations with colleagues across the country, it seems that the trend is away from having a unit or area Keeper responsible for the animals in a regular, five-day workweek. I've heard it said that rotating Keepers through units daily, or every few days, will keep everyone up-to-date on everything and everyone will be an expert.

This really boggles my mind. How can you know an animal if you aren't there the majority of the time? You must know what's **normal** before you can know what's **abnormal**. A skilled five-day Unit Keeper, with a good Relief Keeper, who work together, ensure continuity of care. **NOTHING CAN REPLACE CONTINUITY OF CARE.** Over and over again, during the last 30 years of my involvement with animal care, the one constant that has been proven to be essential is *continuity of care*; it is paramount in exotic animal husbandry. Every time that rotating Keepers was tried during my career, an animal suffered from it. I know of several that have died because lack of familiarity resulted in waiting too long for the animal health department to intervene. I've seen an animal change its behavior in response to an unfamiliar Keeper, which was then misinterpreted. Lastly, inexperienced, unknowledgeable people made decisions about animals that resulted in illness or injury, and sometimes death.

Rotating Keepers every day or every few days has to be a communication nightmare. We all know how difficult communicating is in the best of circumstances.

### Enrichment

It's good to see how this has caught on over the last ten years or so. The AAZK Enrichment Committee helps ensure that enrichment continues to benefit the animals and not cause harm. Fortunate is the Keeper who is given the time and resources to include enrichment as part of their routine. This is an area where supervised volunteers are very helpful, and receive immediate appreciation and gratification for their work. "Enrichment Options", a regular feature in *AKF*, offers ideas and suggestions on a wide range of species, as well as contacts from which to seek advice.

Carefully planned and monitored enrichment programs should be a part of every zoo's operation, for as many species as possible. However, again this is an area where we must share what didn't work as well as what worked. A number of years ago, a kea died of impaction from very fine strands of rubber inside the yarn of what was supposed to be an all wool sock. It had been given to the kea as an "enrichment" item.

### Operant Conditioning and Training

This is another area that has changed dramatically since I retired from Zoo Keeping. It was being done in the mid-1990s but not on the scale that it's being carried out today. Every issue of *AKF* has an article, or two, about how animal husbandry has been improved through training. The animals have certainly benefited in many, many ways.

There are cautions here also. Training in excess can result in dominating the animals, forcing them into "our way" and we no longer learn from them. Again, you must know what's normal for a given animal. You must know if you are causing unhealthy stress. I've been told of a facility that starts training an animal while it is in quarantine. Next to shipping, quarantine is one of the highest stress situations zoo animals have to experience.

On the subjects of both enrichment and training, first, do no harm. Follow the examples and advice of those who have been successful. Here again, there is a wealth of information out there to learn from; it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel.

### Time

People need approximately 30 days to adjust to a new situation, and I've learned that tree kangaroos do also. I'd venture a guess that this applies to animals in general. Time is a tool - use it wisely. One quick example: two facilities with newly acquired snow leopards.

-Keepers at one facility forced transferring the cats on/off exhibit by hosing them, adding to their stress

-A Unit Keeper at the other facility asked the Relief Keeper and Supervisors to work with him and give the excited/stressed animal TIME to adjust. It took several weeks before the snow leopard settled down and was transferring on request. Later when she cubbed, she was very tractable and the neonate exams on her cubs was done with minimal stress to the snow leopards and animal care staff. She turned out to be a very easy-going animal; time well spent.

### AAZK Conferences and *Animal Keepers' Forum*

I joined AAZK in 1973 and was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award and lifetime membership in 1998. AAZK has been through many peaks and valleys since it started as a grass-roots effort by Keepers in San Diego, CA. The original intention of the founders of AAZK was to solve problems with communication and to improve the care of the animals at the San Diego Zoo. AAZK's first newsletter was created in co-founder Dick Sweeney's garage. Dick became the first Executive Director of AAZK and "...was granted permission to unveil the AAZK in a presentation at the 1968 National AAZPA (AZA) Conference in Los Angeles." In 1969 AAZK formalized when a Board of Trustees was appointed.

The first AAZK conference I attended was a regional conference at Boise, ID, on my honeymoon; I had married a Zoo Keeper. In 1974, I presented my first paper at the National AAZK Conference in Chicago. I've lost count of how many AAZK, AZA and Australian Keeper Conferences I attended over the years, but I can say that every one of them helped me be a better Zoo Keeper.

In November 1974, a small group of Keepers and Volunteers from the Topeka Zoo and St. Paul's Como Zoo published the first issue of *AKF*, a whopping four mimeographed pages. The latest issue of *AKF* has 48 pages. Not only has *AKF* grown in size but also in *quality*. Over the past three decades, many dedicated people have made sure *AKF* continues to serve as the AAZK's communiqué about the profession of zoo keeping. Special recognition and appreciation must be given to the Managing Editor, Susan Chan. Unless you've published a newsletter like *AKF* you have no idea how much work goes into making sure we receive *AKF* every month.

What does AAZK mean to you? Mark de Denus' *Viewpoint* article in the August 2006 issue of *AKF*, page 318, was a delight to read. His memories and experiences have been shared by many of us old-timers. AAZK will always be what you, as a member, will make of it.

### **In Closing**

In many ways the zoo profession and zoo keeping have changed dramatically since I became a Keeper in 1975. And yet, the basic needs and care of the animals will always remain most important while zoos continue to evolve. Remember the three essential elements of a zoo are:

1. the animals
2. the enclosures to keep them in
3. the Keepers to care for them.

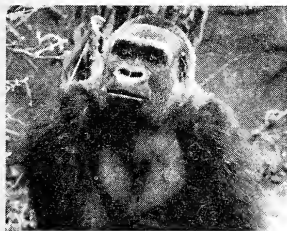
As a Keeper you must continue to hold the line on quality care while continually improving your knowledge and skills, to keep pace, and to be a major contributor, a part of the team. A Keeper is not at the end of the line.....but will always be at the beginning of interpretation.

*It's hard to imagine that one could ever learn all there is to know about zoo animals.....keep learning and sharing.*



I became a Keeper to make a difference and believe I did. I'd like to share with you Larry Collins' words from the last Tree Kangaroo Studbook he published before he retired in 1996.

*"During the past 29 years with NZP I have been witness to changes in the zoo world; many good and some not so good, but in spite of the colossal hurdles we face in our race against the extinction of rare and endangered species I remain eternally optimistic, for I know that there are zealots on our side in the front lines of this fight. There are dedicated individuals who work tirelessly and are not willing to compromise, and are not going to quit in spite of all the odds against us. They may not be the most well known names in the zoo field, and they might not be the most published, but they get things done and they accomplish their goals whether it is raising money for some desperately needed veterinary or field research project or another worthy cause that will increase the chances for survival of a species. I know such individuals exist because I have worked with you over the years. Keep up the good fight."*



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## My First Year as a Zookeeper: Expectations Meet Reality

### Introduction

After I graduated from college, I was not sure what profession I wanted to pursue. I was at a crossroads that many people face, and I tried to envision where I wanted my life to lead. One of my favorite activities growing up was visiting the zoo with my family, and I always thought that working in a zoo would be very interesting. This thought led me to apply for a position as a seasonal part-time keeper at the Saint Louis Zoo Emerson Children's Zoo. Even though I accepted this position, I was not planning on making zookeeping my career.

I had quite a few expectations on what my summer working with animals would entail. I thought that one of the best aspects of the job would be that I would not have to work in an office and that I would spend most of the day outdoors. I was not prepared for how hard it was to work outside in the extreme heat. I also expected that I would have a lot of direct contact with the animals. As the summer progressed, it amazed me how much the reality of being a zookeeper varied from my first perception. I learned that a zookeeper is not only responsible for his/her own safety, but they were also entrusted with the safety of the visitors, his/her coworkers and above all the animals.

That first summer, I learned so much about conservation and zoo animal husbandry that I realized I wanted to make zookeeping my career. I spent the next two years as a part-time keeper in the Children's Zoo until I became a full-time ungulate keeper in February 2005. Now that I have completed my first year as a full-time ungulate keeper, my perception has changed quite a bit even from my understanding as a part-time keeper.

### Safety

I have always known that working with animals can be dangerous, but I was very surprised at how integral safety is in the daily routine of a zookeeper. As a part-timer in the Children's Zoo, I understood that one of a keeper's most important skills was analyzing situations and gaining experience to know how to remain safe in the presence of wild animals. From the first day of training, it is conveyed that it is the keeper's duty to ensure visitor, employee, and animal safety by securing all locks and latches and being observant of any maintenance problems in the exhibits.

However, as an ungulate keeper, safety precautions extend well beyond making sure that the animals in your care are secure in their enclosures. I had only been a full-time keeper for one week when I witnessed my first manual restraint procedure of a Transcaspien urial (*Ovis orientalis arkal*), an Asian species of bighorn sheep. Urial are great rock climbers and their ability to jump is very impressive. The keepers were able to grab the horns of the urial and control him, allowing other keepers to enter the stall, and gradually lower him to the floor for a quick routine hoof trimming procedure. Even though this process looked smooth, I was very intimidated at the thought of being involved in this procedure in the future. I was unsure that I would be strong enough or confident enough to catch a 200-pound jumping animal!

Over the past year, I have slowly been integrated into the rotation of many animal procedures, including manual restraint of ungulates and birds for husbandry and veterinary care purposes. The first time I participated in a hand-catch of an urial, I was unsure if I would be able to successfully restrain him. My co-worker Dave and I stepped into the stall, and the urial tried to walk by on Dave's side of the stall. Dave was able to hold his head, while several other keepers and I got

control of his legs. It really made my adrenaline pump to be a part of that procedure. Even though the first few hand-catches that I participated in were not as smooth as the ural catch that I witnessed, my confidence grew with each successful catch. I now understand the benefits of hand-restraint, and realize that an animal does not need to be put under anesthesia for every treatment. This realization helped me understand how important it is to develop this skill, and to restrain an animal in a way that is the least stressful on them.

I also became aware of how important it is to trust your co-workers. It never occurred to me that zookeeping was a team effort. Throughout this year I have recognized that there are multiple ways in which my co-workers have an effect on my safety. I am fortunate to have very competent and experienced co-workers, and I rely on them to make correct decisions when we enter a stall with an animal for hand-restraints or other procedures. It is also every keeper's responsibility to be vigilant and careful when securing the barn for the night because it could affect another keeper's safety when they enter the barn the next morning.

### **Responsibility**

When I started working at the Children's Zoo I thought that I had a lot of responsibility, however, the increase in responsibility from part-time to full-time surpassed all of my expectations. The biggest difference for me was my own sense of duty for my profession. I found that merely cleaning a stall was no longer enough. I now continuously try to find better and more efficient ways of finishing my routine so that I can devote a greater amount of time and focus on the animals in my care.

The longer that I work with ungulates, the more I want to improve the quality of life for the animals in my care. One of my greatest passions is enrichment. It amazed me how important it became to find new stimulations for our collection so that they could have an improved quality of life. I just recently joined our zoo's enrichment committee. This experience is very exciting because I have the chance to help with enrichment ideas for units throughout the zoo. Our work in trying to encourage all keepers to enrich their animals daily has been successful. Enrichment is supported at our zoo and is a priority at all levels of the organization, and that is very encouraging to me.

Every day that I go to work, I feel like I want to do more to help the animals and my unit. In the future, I would like to take on more responsibility and learn how to use operant conditioning for some of the animals in our collection. I have seen a positive outcome produced by my co-workers who have taken on this responsibility. These animals are not only enriched by the keeper interaction, but they also benefit by learning behaviors that can be used to accomplish various husbandry procedures.

### **Physical Experiences**

One of the biggest assets of becoming full-time as an ungulate keeper is the physical nature of the job. When I started at the Children's Zoo I thought that I would be working with animals all day long, so it was a big shock to learn that this was only one aspect of my job. I had no idea that being a zookeeper entailed raking, sweeping, hosing, digging, dumping barrels, and more! From the time that I became a keeper, I have lost over 30 pounds. Even though it took me a long time to get used to all of the physical work, it is one of my favorite parts of the job especially because I do not need to join a gym!

### **Emotional Experiences**

One powerful aspect of my job is the emotional experiences that occur while working with such a large collection of animals. One of the biggest perks of working with ungulates is that I have experienced the joy of seeing births and have also had the opportunity to work with calves. I never thought that seeing an animal develop from birth would have such an impact on my life. I have learned more about the species that I work with just by studying their behavior than I have reading about them in books. I was able to see an addax calf born (*Addax nasomaculatus*). From the day that our addax calf, Portabella, was born, I saw his connection with his mother, and was surprised at how protective his mother was. It was very intriguing to watch that relationship change from a mother protecting her calf to his immersion as an independent addax in the herd.

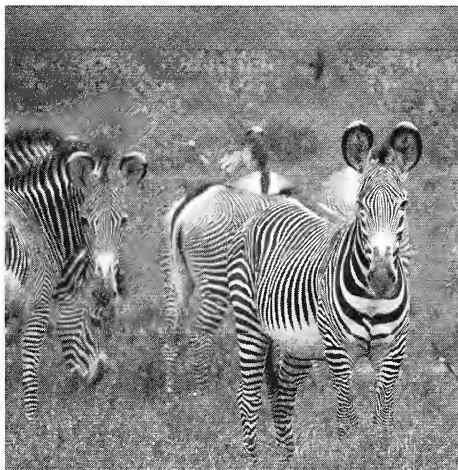
Even though I have had the opportunity to see many births, I have also experienced a few deaths. One of my fondest memories of this past year was the opportunity to work with a Banteng cow (*Bos javanicus*) named Janet. Janet was a 20-year-old cow that was quite a favorite among the keepers in my unit. She was very friendly and was known to lick your hand raw from time to time. Because of Janet's advanced age, she experienced age-related arthritis and was humanely euthanized shortly after I started as a full-timer. Even though it was very difficult to lose an animal that I was attached to, it was a great honor to work with her and to contribute to enhancing her quality of life.

### Conservation

One of my biggest misperceptions of zookeeping is the fact that I thought there was no rhyme or reason to the way that species reproduced. I thought that animals were put into yards with members of their own species, and that they were free to breed from that point forward.

When I began working at the zoo, I was very impressed with the network of zoos that work in partnership to ensure that species are cooperatively managed both genetically and demographically to sustain our zoo populations for the future. It is very exciting to see that zoos, through Species Survival Plans® and Taxon Advisory Groups®, work together and have a common purpose to continue species survival through breeding and management recommendations.

It was also exhilarating to find out that zookeepers can affect conservation efforts in the wild. I had no idea that zoos worked cooperatively with other nations in conservation efforts and in education on the importance of species preservation. The Saint Louis Zoo's Wildcare Institute gives conservation focus all around the world. The Horn of Africa Conservation Center has a strong



conservation focus for the ungulates of East Africa. Three members of my unit were fortunate enough to go to Africa and be a part of conservation at its core. One member of my unit was able to participate in a vaccination trial against anthrax with Grevy's zebras in Kenya. The two other members were part of an Earthwatch® expedition, that studies Grevy's zebras (*Equus grevyi*) in the wild in Kenya. It is very satisfying to know that my work in St. Louis can have a positive effect on species in Africa.

### Conclusion

When I see children visiting the zoo, I wonder if they have similar views on zookeeping that I had as a child. My perception has finally aligned with reality. Even though I do get to work outdoors, I now know that includes working not only on

beautiful sunny days, but also in 100 degree heat and in the snow and the rain. I now know that I am responsible for more than securing an animal in an exhibit; I am responsible for the quality of life of every animal in my care.

I realize that I have the best career in the world because I get to spend time with animals that I love and make a difference in conservation. Above all, my job is constantly changing and presenting challenges that enhances my skill as a zookeeper and makes every day at work new and exciting.

Editor's Note: This article is from the text of a presentation made at the 2006 National AAZK Conference held in Chicago, IL and hosted by the Lincoln Park Zoo AAZK Chapter.

*(The Viewpoint Column offers readers an opportunity to their express opinions on topics related to the profession of animal keeping, AAZK or AKF. It is not a forum for expressing disagreements with employers about labor-related issues. Opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect those of AAZK, Inc. or Animal Keepers' Forum. Publication of opinions in this column does not constitute endorsement by AAZK, Inc. or Animal Keepers' Forum. Materials submitted are published at the discretion of the editor.)*

# Conservation/Legislative Update

Column Coordinators: *Becky Richendollar, North Carolina Zoo*  
and *Greg McKinney, Philadelphia PA*

*This month's column was put together by column co-coordinator Gregory McKinney*



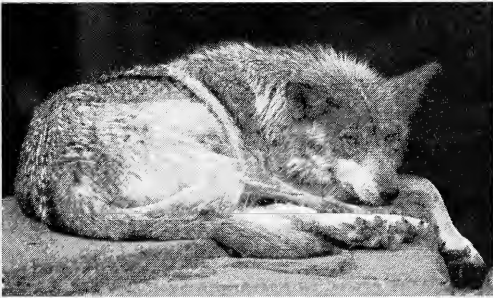
## Conservationists Favor Suspension of Mexican Wolf-Killing Policy

Twenty-nine conservation, animal protection and educational organizations, including participants in the Mexican Wolf Species Survival Plan, sent a letter to the southwestern regional director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service May 9th requesting suspension of the Mexican gray wolf (*Canis lupus baileyi*) predator-control protocol known as "SOP 13." The 29 signatories to the letter range from the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance of Gila, New Mexico, a local group in the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area, to the 10-million-strong Humane Society of the United States, as well as prominent scientists from both sides of the United States-Mexico border and facilities that breed the endangered wolves.

The policy the groups are protesting, SOP 13, was formally adopted by the interagency Mexican Wolf Adaptive Management Oversight Committee in late 2005, but had served as unofficial policy for more than a year before that. It prescribes the punishments wolves receive for preying on livestock and has led to the killings and incarceration of many endangered Mexican gray wolves.

The Species Survival Plan is a network of private facilities that cooperate in the captive breeding of Mexican wolves. It is this pool of captive wolves that staved off extinction after the last-known wild lobo was trapped alive in Mexico in 1980, and enables the current reintroduction program to exist and to continue to release wolves into the wild. The plan works to maximize the genetic diversity in the population that consists of descendants of just seven wolves, the last of their species. Without

genetic diversity the animals can suffer the effects of genetic drift and inbreeding depression, with declining reproductive success and greater unfitnes for long-term survival. The nonprofit groups' collaborative, conscientious management of Mexican wolf genetic integrity has not been reciprocated in the government trapping and killing (including 20 accidental deaths) of wolves to placate livestock owners.



Mexican wolf at Minnesota Zoo  
(Photo by April King)

Said Jeff Williamson, executive director of the Arizona Zoological Society and the Phoenix Zoo, one of the signatory organizations and a participant in the Species Survival Plan, "As a nonprofit organization helping to breed Mexican

wolves to enable reintroduction, we are gravely troubled that so many wolves have been removed from the wild and recovery prospects are significantly diminished."

"This wolf-destroying policy is a pox on the lobo," said Michael Robinson of the Center for Biological Diversity, another signatory group. "But unlike parvovirus or distemper, SOP 13 is a bureaucratic affliction. While publicly supporting wolf reintroduction on the one hand, our government is turning around and killing wolves just for being wolves on the other hand - all to appease a small group of livestock operators."

SOP 13 prescribes a mechanistic, inflexible policy for capturing or killing Mexican wolves, affording no weight to the genetic value of the targeted animal, the social relationship of the implicated wolf to other pack members, the reproductive status of a wolf (including pregnant wolves), the temporal nature of the alleged infractions committed by a wolf (including the likelihood that depredations might cease), the number of wolves on the ground, the range or husbandry conditions - or lack thereof - attending loss of livestock, nor a host of other factors relevant to both recovery and adaptive management of the Mexican gray wolf. *Source: Center for Biological Diversity 5/14/07*

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## Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery

Federal wildlife biologist Mike Coffeen is ecstatic these days. His efforts to save North America's fastest mammal, the endangered Sonoran pronghorn (*Antilocapra americana sonoriensis*), are succeeding beyond expectations. Five years after drought whittled the deer-like animal's population to a handful, pushing it to the brink of extinction, its numbers are back above 100. Biologists are especially encouraged by the 18 fawns born this spring in a square-mile captive breeding enclosure in southern Arizona.



Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS

The goat-sized pronghorn, which are often mistaken for antelope but are genetically distinct, live only in the harsh deserts of southwestern Arizona and in northern Mexico. They can run at speeds approaching 60mph. In 2002, lacking water and forage, the Arizona pronghorn population crashed from nearly 140 to an estimated 21. By the following year, Coffeen and others were hauling water into the desert to try to save the species. Animals were put into a pen surrounded by two electrified fences intended to discourage predators. In dry times, water is piped into the pen to irrigate foliage that pronghorn favor, including shrubs like bursage, chain fruit cholla (*Opuntia fulgida*) and mesquite pods (*Prosopis velutina*). The animals get supplements too: alfalfa, hay and a zoo pellet mix. Shade cloth covering the fencing from inside has succeeded in keeping the frisky pronghorn from running into it at literally breakneck speed. Everything undertaken aims to avoid human contact and prevent domestication, which compromised a similar program in Baja California, Coffeen said. Fawns caught in the wild were bottle-fed and hand-raised in that program.

"One of our primary objectives was to try to raise them as close to wild as possible," said Arizona Game and Fish Department biologist John Hervert. "They still act like wild pronghorn. They still run away. They're not domesticated at all." The pen now holds 43 animals, including the fawns, their mothers, a few adult bucks and several yearlings. The refuge's wild population was estimated at 74 in December with at least another dozen wild-born fawns sighted since.

Coffeen and three Game and Fish employees monitor the enclosure animals daily from an overlooking hill. It will be another 1 1/2 years before the newest pen-born fawns are released into the wild, ready to reproduce. Coffeen said the Cabeza Prieta can sustain 300 to 500 animals in decent conditions but probably less than 100 in severe drought. The pronghorn recovery plan also calls for establishing a second population in the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge near Yuma.

Challenges remain, however. Despite the rebound, the ongoing drought could cause the population to decline again. Habitat remains the core issue, said Jenny Neeley, a spokeswoman for the conservation group Defenders of Wildlife, which has sued the military and federal agencies over their effects on pronghorn habitat. "We're very pleased with the success of the captive breeding program," Neeley said. "Our concern is what happens once the animals are released, because the base problem with pronghorn recovery at the end of the day is, Is there enough suitable habitat to support a sustainable population?"

Border-related activity has heightened the threats to the pronghorn. Border Patrol crackdowns elsewhere have funneled illegal immigrant and drug traffic into their habitat on the refuge, which shares 56 miles of border with Mexico, Neeley said. "The border issue is the issue that is threatening the pronghorn the most," she said, citing migrants, vehicles, vehicle barriers, roads and other infrastructure. A die-off in the wild, and the severity of one, will depend on whether there are normal summer rains, said Hervert, the Game and Fish Department biologist. Keeping the penned animals alive and healthy will be essential, officials said. Toward that end, captive-born fawns are being kept at least another year to become stronger and more mature before release. "We're going to have a setback at some point," said Hervert. "But we have a safety net. Though the population could reverse and decline, we don't expect that it could ever decline to the point that we saw in 2002."

Source: Associated Press, Arthur H Rotstein 5/14/07

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## Conservationists Rally to Oppose Border Fence

Several nonprofit organizations and advocacy groups issued a statement this May calling for the Department of Homeland Security to "slow down" plans to construct 70 miles of fencing from Roma to Brownsville and consider the environmental consequences.

"They're rushing ahead and steamrolling a 30-year effort to protect habitat and the most biologically diverse area in North America," said Jim Chapman, president of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Group of the Sierra Club's Texas chapter. "They need to seriously slow down."

Raising the fence on refuge land and along the Rio Grande will cut off wildlife's access to water and habitat and destroy decades' worth of effort to restore brushland, environmental groups and U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials have said. The Rio Grande Valley is home to a diverse array of birds and wildlife, including the endangered ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) and jaguarundi (*Puma yaguarondi*/*Felis yaguarondi*). With the construction of a fence, wildlife no longer would be able to cross the river to reach habitat in Mexico, and the construction process itself could diminish existing habitat, environmental groups say. Under the Real ID Act, the Department of Homeland Security has authority to waive federal environmental laws, including the Endangered Species Act, while building the fence. U.S. Border Patrol officials met with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representatives this week to discuss environmental concerns. A Border Patrol spokesman said he would forward those comments to the Department of Homeland Security. *Source: The Brownsville Herald, Melissa McEver 5/17/07*

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### Elephant Charity Expelled from Park

*The Daily Telegraph* reported in April that four hotels planned for Samburu and Buffalo Springs national reserves threatened ancient elephant trails and could damage the parks' fragile ecosystems. Two days after the story was published, the local council leaders, who had rubber-stamped the new construction over-riding environmentalists' concerns, ordered Save The Elephants out of Samburu National Reserve. Iain Douglas-Hamilton, the founder of the British-registered charity which raised the alarm, was accused of "publishing malicious reports". He said his "quarrel was purely scientific".

"There have simply not been enough studies to determine the environmental and ecological impact of this construction on the elephants' habitats," Douglas-Hamilton said. His request to appeal against the 21-day eviction notice, which expired on May 21st, was rejected by the council. Douglas-Hamilton, D Phil in Zoology from Oxford University, was awarded the OBE (Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) for his work with elephants and is credited with publicizing the slaughter of Kenya's herds by poachers in the 1970s and 1980s. The Telegraph has learned that a stop order was drawn up in mid-March on one of the four planned lodges on the basis that environmental studies carried out for the 124-bed unit had "withheld crucial information" when its license was approved. But the order was subsequently stopped by Muusya Mwinzi, the head of Kenya's National Environment Management Authority (Nema), and Somak Ltd, the company involved, says it never received the order. Mr Mwinzi said he had found "no scientific basis" for stopping the construction. *Source: Mike Pflanz, The Daily Telegraph 5/16/07*



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### Endangered Turtle Found in Mekong in Cambodia

A colony of one of the world's largest turtles has been found in a remote stretch of the Mekong in Cambodia, raising hopes the species can be saved from extinction. Scientists of Conservation International (CI), WWF and Cambodia's fisheries department said they had caught and freed an 11kg (24 lb.) female Asian giant soft-shell turtle (*Pelochelys bibroni*) during a survey of the river in March. They also found the turtles' nesting ground in a riverbank in the northeastern province of Stung Treng, a former stronghold of the Khmer Rouge guerrillas, around 180km (115 mi.) north of Phnom Penh.

The turtle, which spends 95% of its life hidden in sand or mud with only its eyes and nose showing, can grow up to two metres (6') long and weigh more than 50kg (110 lb.). It is thought to exist in India, Bangladesh and southeast Asia, although years of being hunted for its meat means it now sits on the IUCN conservation union's "red list" of threatened species, the same level as tigers and pandas. *Source: Reuters 5/16/07*

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### China Continues Attempts to Reopen Tiger Trade

The world's dwindling tiger (*Panthera tigris*) population faces an alarming new threat as China attempts to reopen the trade in tiger parts for traditional medicines, conservationists in India warned when a seven-member delegation from China visited Delhi in May to seek support from its neighbour for a proposal that wildlife experts say would lead to the tiger being wiped out in the wild.

But Indian officials ruled out supporting China's bid to lift the 14-year global ban on the trade at an upcoming meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. Indian support

for a resumption of tiger-parts trade is important given it is home to an estimated 3500 tigers, believed to represent about half of the world's wild tiger population. China claims to have raised more than 5000 tigers in captivity and says that in addition to being used in traditional medicine, they could be used to replenish declining tiger populations in the wild.

China is free to sell tiger parts domestically — and according to conservationists, it does so, despite signing up to the CITES ban on global trade imposed in 1993. It wants international approval of its trade, arguing that by permitting a controlled trade in the parts of tigers bred on farms, the heat will be taken off tigers in the wild that are killed by poachers. Conservationists refute those claims, saying that lifting the CITES ban on trade would ensure an open season on all wild tigers and further devastate their already decreasing numbers. *Source: The Australian, Bruce Loudon 5/19/07*

### **eBay Condemned for Allowing “rampant” Ivory Trade**

International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) said it had conducted a survey in Britain, Australia, China, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Canada and the United States and tracked more than 2,200 elephant ivory items listed on eBay websites. It found more than 90% of the listings breached even eBay's own wildlife policies. International wildlife trade laws differ from country to country and are often complex, but according to the IFAW in general it is illegal to sell carved or uncarved ivory unless it is antique and accompanied by a proof of age certificate. The Fund says the only way to protect elephants from poachers is to shut down the markets where illegal ivory can easily be passed off as antique.

“As the world's largest online shop window, eBay has a special responsibility to lead the way by banning ivory from their sites. Only a global ban on all ivory sales will remove the cover under which this criminal activity currently operates and as a result, seriously help to decrease illegal trade and the cruel and unnecessary slaughter of elephants”, said Robbie Marsland, IFAW's British director.

Gareth Streeter, a spokesman for eBay in London, said in a statement the Web site operated policies to “restrict the sale of ivory in accordance with existing UK and international law. We have had a number of positive and fruitful discussions with the IFAW about how we can work together to ensure that our policies are effectively enforced, and we are committed to working with them to tackle the problem of illegal ivory sales.” *Source: Reuters 5/14/07*

In a related item from the Hague in The Netherlands, CIITES approved on 3 June the sale of 60 tons of ivory to Japan despite fears it could lead to increased poaching of endangered elephants. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, or CITES, said its officials would closely monitor the sale see whether it affects the black market.

South Africa, Botswana and Namibia are selling the ivory from stocks gathered from elephants that have died naturally. All three countries pledged to deposit the revenue in trust funds for further conservation. The sale was adopted by CITES' 18-country standing committee, which meets annually. John Sellar of the CITES secretariat said it was completely separate from the black market. “There's no way that a poacher can get into the system,” he said.

Still, the exception to the ban on ivory trade — the second since the ban was imposed in 1989 — was opposed by several African countries, which feared it would spur poaching. It also revealed a split among nongovernment agencies dedicated to defending the diversity of plants and animals.

The World Wild Fund for Nature said it was satisfied with the controls surrounding the sale, but a broad range of other groups denounced the decision. “It's very frustrating that the facts about the scale of the illegal trade were completely ignored,” said Peter Pueschel, of the International Fund for Animal Welfare. He said the level of intercepted illegal ivory had reached record levels in the past two years.

The sale was conditionally approved in 2002 but was held up until an adequate monitoring system against poaching could be put in place, and until Japan — the only designated buyer — provided assurances it could control its use and preventing its re-export. At the last moment, China asked to take part in the ivory auction, but failed to win a majority on the committee. The voting countries split 6-6. A competing proposal from Kenya and Mali would tighten the ivory ban, eliminating some exceptions and imposing a moratorium for 20 years on exceptional sales.



CITES lists more than 7,000 animals and 32,000 plants whose trade is regulated. About 800 highly threatened species are banned from commercial trade, with few exceptions.

Over the course of the June CITES meeting, the conference was expected to vote on other proposals to grant export quotas to Botswana, South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe, where elephant populations have rebounded, and to let them conduct limited trade in elephant hides, leather goods and live animals. *Source: YahooNews.com Arthus Max, AP writer 6/2/07*

### **Dozens of European Mammal Species Face Extinction**

Dozens of European mammals, including the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus/Felis pardina*) the elusive Saiga antelope (*Saiga tatarica*) and the Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*), face extinction unless immediate measures are taken to protect them. A total of 35 of the continent's 231 mammal species — about 15% — fall into the threatened category, according to a report on the state of Europe's mammals published by the World Conservation Union.

The 60-page report commissioned by the European Union warns that 27% of mammal species show a fall in numbers, compared with eight percent that are increasing. Two European land mammals — a rabbit-like creature called the Sardinian pika (*Prolagus sardus*) and the aurochs (*Bos primigenius*), an ancestor to domestic cattle species — have already disappeared completely, while the gray whale (*Eschrichtius robustus*) has become extinct in European waters though it can still be found in the Pacific. According to the IUCN, the saiga antelope, the Mediterranean monk seal, the North Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*), the Bavarian pine vole (*Microtus bavaricus*) and world's most endangered cat species — the Iberian lynx — could soon follow. *Source: The Associated Press, Arthur Max 5/14/07*

A great website with details from the European Mammal Assessment: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/species/ema/index.htm>

### **Thousands of Bird Species Under Threat**

More than one fifth of the world's bird species are under threat and one in eight is struggling for survival, a report says. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources will add 11 species to its "red list" of most threatened species, following the report by BirdLife International, a global alliance of conservation bodies. The annual evaluation of bird species also added 17 species to the near-threatened category. Overall, 2,033 species are thought to be in danger. The loss or deterioration of habitat, due to factors such as dams, fishing and cattle numbers, was to blame for the plight of 86% of the 1,221 most threatened species.



BirdLife International said that since the survey was first carried out in 1988 the conservation status of birds has "deteriorated steadily". Five species of vultures are nearer extinction, according to the report. The St. Helena plover (*Charadrius sanctaehelenae*) and the waved albatross (*Diomedea irrorata*) of the Galapagos Islands are also seriously threatened. There are, however, some bright spots of hope. Mauritius parakeets (*Psittacula eques*) have been downgraded from critically endangered to endangered because of releases of captive birds, the

provision of artificial nest sites and measures to control predators.

However, Alistair Gammell, the international director of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said: "While conservation efforts have been successful in recovering some species, there are more and more species slipping towards extinction every year." *Source: The Times, Will Parvia & Lewis Smith 5/21/07*

### **Julie MacDonald Scandal Grows**

Memos obtained through the Freedom of Information Act by the Center for Biological Diversity have further implicated Julie MacDonald in improper and potentially criminal actions. On 27 January 2005, prominent industry lobbyist and anti-endangered species litigator, Steven Quarles, emailed MacDonald, requesting a meeting, in his own words, to "secure easy 'yeses' to outrageous requests." Later in the day Quarles emailed MacDonald's secretary, asking her to pass a message on to MacDonald to "just go in and erase all those back emails but I must admit I suspect some of them

are mine...and, of course, THEY are critically important.” If MacDonald deleted the emails as instructed, she may have violated federal laws prohibiting the deletion of government emails.

In a second memo dated 5 May 2005, USFWS scientists reveal that the Assistant Secretary of Interior’s Office (from which MacDonald oversaw the Fish and Wildlife Service) issued a secret policy forcing the Fish and Wildlife Service to ignore scientific information supporting petitions to add species to the endangered species list. The policy required the Fish and Wildlife Service to only divulge information that could be used to refute listing petitions, while ignoring supporting information.

The policy, which was never made public, blatantly violates the Endangered Species Act requirement to use all the best available scientific information to make listing decisions. It was used by the Fish and Wildlife Service to deny a petition by the Center for Biological Diversity to retain the desert nesting bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) on the endangered species list when the rest of the species was removed on 29 June 2007. The agency’s denial states that it has no information supporting the Center for Biological Diversity’s petition, when in fact its own scientists, its own seven-member scientific peer review panel, and the former head of the Arizona bald eagle recovery program all recommended the agency keep the desert eagle on the endangered species list. The only opponents to retaining protection were top-level agency bureaucrats.

Julie MacDonald resigned 30 April 2007 after a rebuke from the department’s inspector general over other endangered species issues. According to a report in the *Contra Costa Times*, MacDonald was heavily involved in delisting the Sacramento splittail (*Pogonichthys macrolepidotus*) while owning an 80-acre farm in the creature’s California habitat. The fish was listed as threatened from 1999 to 2003 until it was taken off the list after intervention by MacDonald, who was deputy assistant secretary for fish, wildlife and parks when she resigned. Biologists in the Sacramento field office had concluded the fish should remain on the list. *Sources: Associated Press and Center for Biological Diversity 5/25/07*

### **Interior Secretary Scraps Proposed Changes to Endangered Species Act**

Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne said on 25 May he has scrapped a proposal that critics said would protect fewer rare plants and animals from extinction. Kempthorne said that while he doesn’t think Congress should change the Endangered Species Act, the department is still looking for ways to change how the law is enforced. Environmentalists in March had made public a draft of rule changes the Interior Department was considering that they said would reduce the number of species that could be saved. They said the draft changes were so broad they amounted to gutting the program.

“That predated me. I’ve put a stop to that,” Kempthorne said during a lunch with a small group of reporters marking his first anniversary as Interior Secretary. He did not elaborate on what kind of changes are still under review.

Noah Greenwald, a biologist in Portland, OR, for the Center for Biological Diversity, said he remains concerned that the department is considering regulatory changes that will make it easier to remove some animals, such as the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*), from the protection of the law or make it harder to list a specie that is at risk. Under one change proposed in the earlier draft, it would no longer be considered important to protect the historic range of a specie – only its current location. That could keep the increasingly rare Pacific Fisher (*Martes pennanti pacifica*), a mink-like creature, from being reintroduced in areas of the Northwest where it once thrived, and increase its likelihood of extinction, said Greenwald.

“Kempthorne has been a disaster for endangered species,” maintained Greenwald. He said that while 279 species have been declared “candidates” for listing as endangered, and three have been recommended for “emergency” listing, none has been added since Kempthorne became secretary.

Kempthorne said Fish and Wildlife Service officials are frustrated that the federal law has not protected more species and that rules implementing it need improvement. “We’re seriously looking at that,” said Kempthorne. He did not provide further details except to say he though more emphasis should be given to recovery “so that we do not wait until you’re at a point where a species is on the brink.”

*Source: Associated Press, H. Josef Hebert 5/25/07*

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